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AMERICA

AND THE AMERICANS.

BY

W. E. BAXTER, Esq., M.P.

LONDON:
GEO. ROUTLEDGE & CO., FARRINGDON STREET.
NEW YORK: 18, BEEKMAN STREET.
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PREFATORY NOTICE.

THE substance of this work was delivered in the form of Lectures, at Dundee, last autumn. The Author has added little, and made few alterations of any consequence; but every sentence has undergone a careful revision, with a view of preventing misapprehension, and securing that confidence on the part of the public which, notwithstanding difference of opinion, accuracy and impartiality generally command.

London, March 24th, 1855.

AMERICA AND THE AMERICANS.

CHAPTER I.

Introductory remarks—English Tourists on the Continent of Europe—Qualifications of a good traveller—Advantages of visiting foreign countries—Claims of America in this respect—Statement of my plan and purpose—The Cunard and Collins steamers—Voyages on the North Atlantic—Approach to New York—A glimpse at the future of the Great Republic.

THACKERAY, in one of his amusing novels, remarks, "To see with one's own eyes, men and countries, is better than reading all the books of travels in the world." So think the majority of English parents in affluent circumstances, and accordingly the education of young men who have attended the classes at our great seminaries of learning, is not considered as complete until they have made what we usually style "the grand tour." In lands celebrated by poets and philosophers of the olden time, they finish their classical studies, and begin their observations on the aspect of things in the world. Having in the halls of the university repeated the burning language of Cicero, and pored over the finished strains of the Mantuan bard, they set out on a pilgrimage to the ruins of that forum which once rung with the plaudits of excited Romans; and to those scenes of rural beauty which Virgil, in his Georgics, so accurately describes. Among orange and olive trees they trace the site of the Academia where Plato taught wisdom to the youth of Athens; and from the top of Hymettus, the mountain of the honey bees, they look down on Marathon and Salamis, on spots which will be sacred to the goddess of liberty, until Grecian heroes cease to

add interest to the historic page. One can now see almost any day under-graduates of Oxford ascending the Pyramid of Cheops, and Cambridge men smoking their nargilehs on the banks of Abana and Pharphar, rivers of Damascus. After a year thus spent in the ancient seats of civilization, they return to be introduced at court, and assume their position in society, but not to remain permanently at home; for the tastes acquired in more luxurious climates generally induce them, before long, again to visit the shores of the Mediterranean, and to linger in the unrivalled galleries of Italian art. Formerly they quoted Horace, and sought with eager eye the localities celebrated in the elegant pages of Livy, now with Tasso they sing of "the pious arms and the great commander who liberated the sepulchre of Christ," and bow almost reverently before Rafael's Transfiguration, in the Vatican. Painting and sculpture have usurped the places in their ardent minds which the poetry and eloquence of Greece and Rome once occupied, and the odes of Petrarch supersede the tender strains of Anacreon. Watch them as they saunter by the banks of the Arno, or lounge below the fig-trees on the Palatine; these men will wander far and wide over Europe before they settle down to cultivate their paternal acres, for they have felt the charms of novelty among a strange people, and under a southern sky, and they will always hear, even in busy London, the voice of sirens drawing them towards warmer regions, where the mulberry and the palm-tree grow. Nor do the more ambitious rest here. They are not contented with the beaten track of mere loungers in search of pleasure or the fine arts; but long to explore countries less known than Tuscany—to get beyond the reach of ordinary tourists, and whilst young and active, to lay up for themselves a stock of knowledge, from which they may derive lasting satisfaction in after years. With some of these men the love of travelling becomes a rage, and before they have reached middle life, like Alexander, they sit down and deplore the absence of new kingdoms

to conquer. Not a city in Europe but they have seen, not a river which they do not know, not a mountain with whose outlines they are not familiar, not a potentate to whom they have not lifted their hats, not a people whose dress or manners to them is new. A secret power seems to drive them ever onward, till nothing can be found to excite curiosity or gratify the desire for change. They set out on journeys without knowing whither they are bound, and all places are alike interesting to them, because they have seen them all before. They remind me of the vagabond Lamas of Tartary, who may be found, now in the tea-growing districts of China, and a few months afterwards in the tents of nomadic Arabs on the plains of Turkistan. Once and again I have met such men, and listened to their hairbreadth escapes and wonderful tales. They can scarcely be called citizens of any particular country, but from long habit and with restless impulses, they roam over the earth without "a local habitation," or a home to receive them when in the sear and yellow leaf. There is another class of tourists, appropriately designated by Sir Walter Scott, "Englishmen in search of the comfortable," who have afforded me no small amusement when they happened to cross my path. They are usually to be found in Switzerland or on the Rhinè, poring over bills of fare, written in puzzling French, or clamorous for beefsteaks and egg-cups. One cannot spend half an hour more profitably than in listening to their conversation when two or three parties have met at supper, to compare notes of their day's experiences. Not a word is said about noble ruins, architectural triumphs, or mountains and rivers, whose vastness raises the mind to Deity. Far different themes suffice for them. The first never got a better dinner in his life than at the Hotel D'Angleterre; the second could not drink the sherry which he ordered yesterday; the third can't conceive what pleasure there is in travelling in countries where the beds are so small; the fourth laments the ignorance of certain individuals who could not answer his interrogations in English; the fifth

objects to the cooking at Chamouni; the sixth threatens to inform the editor of the *Times* that the landlord at the Hospice where he remained to dine, kept no tolerable port. Occasionally a man of this kind is led by some unexplained fatality, to wander out of the well-worn paths, and then like a swimmer beyond his depth, he betrays excessive agitation, and bawls lustily for assistance.

To travel profitably, it has always appeared to me that a person, in addition to habits of observation, a candid spirit and an amiable temper, must have some previous acquaintance by means of books with the countries whose scenery, manners and institutions he desires to see. He then knows what to look for, and does not fail to notice peculiarities which might otherwise escape him. He can thus more easily make comparisons, form true estimates, and hit upon the points of most general interest. As the Spanish proverb says, "He who would bring home the wealth of the Indies, must carry the wealth of the Indies with him." A friend of mine told me that last autumn he met in the highlands of Scotland two men from the English midland counties, of gentlemanly aspect and demeanour, who were so ignorant of our social state, that they had brought with them an immense box containing bread, meat, cheese, and beer for their sustenance in a country where they expected to find only kilted Celts fed on cakes and porridge. Even Dr. Johnson, wise as he was, before setting out on his tour to the Hebrides, provided himself with a pair of pistols, some gunpowder and a quantity of bullets: and nothing is more common than to find educated people about to visit parts of the world, of whose history, geography and resources they know absolutely nothing. No wonder they commit most egregious mistakes, and after all return very little wiser than they were at starting.

I need not dwell at any length on the advantages derived from personal observation in foreign countries, where one shakes off the limited notions, the crude opinions, the prejudices, the exclusiveness and the

mantle of illiberality which he is apt to contract at home, and by careful attention to the manners and customs of other nations, by contrasting one state of society with another, and by intercourse with the wise and good abroad, learns to see things in their proper bearings, and to look beyond the contracted limits of a territory or a sect. A narrow circle of acquaintanceship, a life of comparative exclusion, an unwearied repetition of the same opinions, must tend to limit the operations of the mind; but the man whose natural powers fit him to rise above such restraints, when he begins to mix with the great world around him, will soon see the glimmerings of light through the dense mists which have hitherto enveloped him; and if his disposition be one of real goodness, he will become as tolerant as enlightened, as patient as profound; conscious how far he himself had erred, he will look with a kindlier eye on the frailties of others; reminded of his former ignorance at every step of his progress, he will judge his neighbours more leniently, cherish a spirit of charity and meekness, and "so fulfil the law of Christ."

The rapid extension of railroad and steamboat communication of late years throughout the Continent, has brought near to us places which our fathers looked upon as at the uttermost ends of the earth, and enabled many to visit countries little known and remote, who but for it would have been obliged to content themselves with less distant journeys. In the orange groves of the Grecian Archipelago, in the bazaars of Constantinople, on the rocks where the two seas met and stranded the bark of St. Paul, seated at a frugal meal on the top of the Apennines, riding over the dreary plains of Castile, among vines overhanging the Tagus, on board little vessels on the Swedish lakes, driving in carrioles across the Fjeldes of Norway, wherever anything new is to be seen, there you may be assured of meeting a countryman with his shooting-jacket, map and note-book, one who can talk of Venetian gondolas and Finnish sledges, and who knows the various kingdoms between Gibraltar and

Archangel as well as a Scottish cotter knows the parish where he was bred.

Now it has frequently occurred to me whilst conversing in these out-of-the-way places with intelligent youths of this class, that there is one country which modern science has brought almost to our very doors, but which they in their commendable desire to enlarge their minds by foreign experience seem most unaccountably to have overlooked. Without in the least depreciating the advantages to be derived from visiting the galleries of Italy, the Vega of Granada, the passes of the Alps or the wild fiords on the Norwegian coast, I am inclined to think that the time of many keen observers of men and manners might be much better spent in the United States of America. True there are in that great republic no ruins of arches, and towers, and mighty palaces,

> "Remnants of things that have passed away,
> Fragments of stone reared by creatures of clay;"

no grim castles perched on rocky heights, no glaciers on which the natural philosopher can pitch his tent, no legends to be told in the moonshine as it blends with the lights of eve, no costumes reminding one of ages long gone by, no gloomy cathedrals, or brilliant courts, or regal thrones; but there are things much more interesting in this progressive age: cities starting up like mushrooms on the banks of lakes but lately explored —prairies awakened into new life by an advancing multitude of busy men—church-spires appearing above the forests which a few years ago sheltered the wigwam of the savage—locomotives snorting on the pasture grounds of the buffalo—new ideas in social economics carried into practice with a vigour unknown in older lands—the experiment of self-government being tried on a scale which excites the wonder of the world—independent commonwealths springing into existence complete, well-ordered, ready for energetic action, like Minerva, full armed from the head of Capitolian Jove.

The thoughtful and practical mind, interested in the

advancement of man as a free, intellectual and responsible being, convinced that ancient customs and dominions have become obsolete and unsuitable to the demands of society, will learn far more during a couple of months' residence in the United States than in the course of many summers spent in Italy. The energy, enterprise, industry and inventive skill of the Anglo-Americans secure for their country a glorious future; and if they are fond of novelty, apt to run into extremes, always ready to embark in schemes which promise advantage, however wild, their dearly bought experiences serve as a lesson to us, and from their failures as well as from their achievements we may learn wisdom. Armies of soldiers and bureaucrats confine the actions of men on the European continent within a contracted sphere; the natural elasticity of the human spirit is checked; the people move like automatons at the beck of despotic cliques, and nations which long ere this ought to have acquired the full stature of manhood, have not yet put away childish toys; but in America thought is as free as the air on the prairies; an educated public themselves hold the reins of power; one may say what he pleases, and go where he pleases, "none daring to make him afraid." The principles of the Pilgrim Fathers have pervaded a vast confederation; and if error is allowed free scope, truth is unfettered also, and by its unaided power has proved how much it can accomplish without the support of civil authority or coercive laws. One cannot be long in the country before observing that New England influence everywhere carries the day, and that notwithstanding the unceasing immigration of Irish Catholics and German rationalists, the influx of vagabonds and criminals from other nations, and the utmost exertions of visionaries in politics, morals, and religion, the great body of the people are deeply imbued with the principles of law and order, and persuaded that the pillars of their national greatness rest on the Protestant faith.

English travellers have, however, during the last year

or two turned their attention more to the United States, and not a few well qualified to state their impressions with candour and accuracy, have spent in them leisure time which would otherwise have been passed in continental resorts where they had nothing new to learn. These modern observers of American manners and progress have arrived at very different conclusions from those superficial writers who, formerly, circulated in Great Britain mere caricatures of a people destined at no distant date to plant the standard of civil and religious liberty in every nook and corner of North America. Ocean steamers, railroads, and telegraphs have led to an intercourse between the two countries which will prove the surest guarantee of mutual good feeling, and which has already exposed the fallacies and misrepresentation of book-makers, desirous not of eliciting truth, but of pandering to a vitiated public taste. Farther on I shall have something more to say about authors of this class; at present, suffice it to remark that tourists of far more ability and real acquaintance with the institutions of the Union, men like Mr. Alexander Mackay and Sir Charles Lyell, have, in their able publications, informed us of the true facts of the case, and thereby consigned calumnious publications to merited oblivion. I shall dwell more fully by-and-by on the testimony of these and other influential persons; in the mean time I may say here, at the outset of my remarks, that the verdict of nearly all the intelligent Englishmen who have recently travelled in America, is decidedly favourable. They agree with me in condemning the harsh statements once believed on this side of the Atlantic, in expressing astonishment and pleasure at what they saw in the Great Republic, and in auguring from the material improvements, the mental activity, the moral power, and the religious energy of the Anglo-Americans a destiny which will equal, if not eclipse, anything of which we have yet read in history.

Early in the spring of 1846 I started on my first trip to the United States, and before autumn I had travelled

several thousand miles in the central, northern, and part of the western districts of the Union, besides visiting Upper and Lower Canada. My observations were carefully noted down at the time, and now I can compare them with those made during a much more extended journey in the years 1853 and 1854, in the course of which I visited the Far West, the Southern slaveholding States, and the island of Cuba, besides many portions of the Atlantic seaboard, the Lake country, and the valley of the Ohio, omitted during my former tour. My principal object in crossing the ocean, was by personal inspection, by intercourse with men in public and private life, by general conversation and careful inquiry, to understand the people and form correct impressions of their manners, institutions, politics, social economy, and national prospects; keeping this object in view, I made a point of gaining access to different circles, commercial, political, literary, and religious, so as to hear the opinions of men who took opposite views on the leading questions of the day, and, if possible, to avoid one-sidedness and partiality. Having read all the books relating to the Union, which have appeared for many years past, I had arranged in my own mind the principal subjects of interest before setting out, thus availing myself of the labours of others in order to correct and facilitate my own investigations. My desire, now, is to exhibit, in a popular form, the result of my inquiries, to describe what I saw and heard on the other side of the Atlantic, to present my readers with evidence, after hearing which they can form their own opinions; and if my notes are necessarily imperfect and faulty, I trust to their kindness in giving me credit for truthfulness and candour.

My wish is to be fair and impartial in stating facts which came under my notice, without dogmatism or theorizing; to suggest, not to pronounce judgment; to supply them with materials for coming to correct conclusions, not to advocate particular nostrums of my own. I do not expect to be always consistent, for a determination to be consistent often involves a sacrifice of

truth, and as Miss Bremer somewhere remarks, "is the hobgoblin of little minds." At the same time it is not very easy for a writer to discuss some questions which naturally arise out of a theme like this without at least indicating his own sentiments; and if these do not in all cases accord with those of others, he can but throw himself on the indulgence of his readers and ask for their attention, if not their acquiescence. No man can write on America without touching on church polity, education, temperance, and slavery. On these questions great difference of opinion exists amongst us; but as my principal object in visiting the United States was to examine those very subjects, I must boldly enter upon their discussion, endeavouring to keep my personal impressions as much as possible in the background, but concealing, modifying, exaggerating nothing, for the purpose of conciliating parties who have already taken up particular ground, or of securing popular approbation and applause. Some things which I saw on the other side of the Atlantic ran counter to my preconceived ideas, some favoured them; there are two sides of every important question which now agitates the Union. I shall endeavour to tell all—to make a clean breast of it—although many persons may be thus led to form different views from mine; so that, however vexatious some of my statements may appear in relation to theories now in vogue, all who read them may at least be able to apply to me the words of the unfortunate Chatterton:—

> "Behold the manne! hee spake the truthe,
> Hee's greater thanne a kynge."

Thirty-five years ago one of Scotland's ablest scientific men told a friend of mine that, however well vessels driven by steam-power might suit on rivers, they could never be rendered serviceable on broad estuaries, much less on the ocean. In 1835 a leading 'Review' pronounced as impracticable the attempt of steam-ships to

cross the Atlantic; not long afterwards the guns of the 'Sirius' in the bay of New York, proclaimed to excited multitudes that the problem was solved; in June, 1853, the 'Arabia,' the crack ship of the Cunard line, arrived off the Bell Buoy, in the Mersey, having accomplished her voyage from Jersey city, on the Hudson, in nine days seventeen hours. For many years past the vessels belonging to this company had made their passages with as much, if not more, regularity than any steamers which trade on the English coast. But, if in respect to their management and the excellence of their machinery, they are unrivalled, the Collins' boats which now carry the mails of the United States, bear off the palm as far as model and external accommodation are concerned. I have made not a few sea voyages in steam-ships of various nations; but of none do I cherish such a pleasing recollection as of that performed last January in the American packet 'Baltic,' although it blew a furious gale of wind from the time we left the Highlands of Neversink until we sighted the coast of Ireland. She is a noble steamer of 2700 tons, with three decks, an engine of eight hundred horse-power, a spacious dining room, capable of seating two hundred people, and two elegantly furnished drawing rooms, the former above, the latter below the main deck, besides a smoking room, spacious apartments for the officers, and quite a village of private state rooms. Her dinner table was loaded with the greatest luxuries of the season, and every person who is in the habit of frequently crossing the Atlantic, knows that a better seaman, or a more attentive, agreeable man than Captain Joseph J. Comstock never trod the quarter-deck of an ocean steamer.

The North Atlantic presents few interesting phenomena like those which amuse the sailor within the tropics; you may cross it without seeing a single ship, or anything more exciting than shoals of porpoises darting through the heaving waves, and a few whales and blackfish spouting around the vessel. But the ocean is

never altogether wanting in variety, and to minds peculiarly constituted always has charms, even in latitudes where no flying-fish rise before the prow, and no albatross reposes its wings on the painted and mirror-like deep. How majestic the swell of the sea after a gale, when huge steamers roll for days unceasingly, as if masts and funnel would go overboard, when the utmost vigilance is required to prevent yourself being pitched headlong out of your berth and when every timber creaks from stem to stern, the billows towering like mountains about to overwhelm the frail bark, and the surges moaning like a wild beast of the desert, disappointed of his prey! Nor can I forget the excitement of a sudden hurricane from an adverse quarter, the wind howling in the rigging, the whistle of the boatswain, the shouts on deck, the heavens darkened with spray, the troubled waters seething and boiling in agony, displaying ever and anon abysses fearful to contemplate, and making the ship quiver as she breasts the foaming waves, startled petrels meanwhile wailing around the vessel which no force of steam can drive a-head against the fury of the elements. Now the spirits of the vasty deep seem to be let loose, and billows, gigantic as the Himalayas, swallow up each other with a stupendous roar. Sometimes, too, the cold winds of Labrador sweep silently along to meet the voyager, a dense snowstorm obscures the light of day, no one appears on the deserted deck but the look-out man and the watchful officer; gradually bulwarks, paddleboxes, masts and rigging become spotlessly white, the thermometer falls to zero, salt water freezes even in the cabins, and the vessel moves along like a living iceberg. Again the scene changes. Boreas retires to the chambers of the north, mild zephyrs from the islands of spices waft you along, while the seafowl pounce on their fishy prey, and the ducks dive and gambol around the vessel; to a sultry noon succeeds a delicious eve; when the last streaks of light fade in the west, the ship leaves behind her a bright phosphorescent track on which

you musingly gaze, till drowsiness oppresses you, and then

> "It is the midnight hour; the beauteous sea
> Calm as the cloudless heaven, the heaven discloses,
> While many a sparkling star, in quiet glee,
> Far down within the watery sky reposes,
> As if the ocean's heart were stirred
> With inward life, a sound is heard,
> Like that of dreamer murmuring in his sleep;
> 'Tis partly the billow and partly the air
> That lies like a garment floating fair
> Above the happy deep."

There is something deeply solemnizing in the pathless ocean mournfully heaving under the silent stars. At such a time, a feeling of loneliness steals gradually over the senses, and the mind, by an irresistible impulse, is borne upwards to "Him who holdeth the waters in the hollow of His hand." On shore, the variety of the seasons, of hills and dales, of quiet forests and busy towns, the routine of life, the bustle of men, banish serious thought; and there, too, plenty and peace lull one to a false security; but at sea, where far as the eye can reach, nothing breaks the prospect over a wild waste of surges, where every threatening cloud causes anxiety, and where the tempest warns us how near the confines of eternity we stand, cold and callous must be the heart of him who thinks not of his Maker. I have already quoted from Wilson's "Isle of Palms;" and frequently when watching the drifting spray, and listening to the thunder of the billows, have I thought of another passage in that beautiful poem:—

> "For who, when nought was heard around
> But the great ocean's solemn sound,
> Feels not as if the Eternal God
> Were speaking in that dread abode?"

A year and a half ago I was on board the 'Pacific' steamer, sixteen hundred miles from our desired haven, when her mainshaft gave way, rendering altogether useless the starboard paddlewheel, and producing an effect among the passengers which words cannot well describe. Several years before I was sitting on the hurricane deck

of the 'Hibernia,' crossing the banks of Newfoundland in a dense fog, when "Helm hard-a-port" roused every one in the ship, and the timeous order saved us from being dashed to pieces on an iceberg, the freezing wind from which sent a momentary chill through our frames. In the spring of 1846, the packet which carried me to Boston got amongst field-ice, which, after breaking many of her floats, she was unable to penetrate. The engines were therefore stopped, the vessel put about, and steered two hundred miles to the southward, till one lovely evening we arrived at the termination of the frozen plain, and threaded our way amongst numerous icebergs, appearing in the distance like the snow-clad summits of the Bernese Alps, assuming as we approached more fantastic forms, and displaying a variety of arches, minarets, and domes, besides spacious grottoes, through which the water dashed in clouds of spray.

The company on board these Transatlantic steamers is generally of the most mixed character,—old-stagers from the great cities, who cross every year on business; parties of Americans going to see or returning from seeing Europe; English pleasure-seekers bound for the plains where the buffaloes roam; vulgar Californians exposing their under-breeding by an excessive fastidiousness; Germans who eat three times as much as other people; farmers from the West, on their way to buy Saxony sheep, and groaning at the ordeal of narrow berths and sea-sickness; lumber-men from New Brunswick, very personifications of coarseness; Cockneys sneering at everything and everybody; young officers stationed in Canada; southern men, whose special vocation seems to be to quarrel with all and sundry on the slavery question; ship-captains and play-actors; clergymen and members of the swell-mob; forming for the time being a happy family, devoted to eating, sleeping, gambling, quarrelling, making bets, and singing songs in the smoking-room. Then the last day of the passage, the chief steward puts on his best suit; the baker sends in huge cakes adorned with Venuses and Cupids; the

cook exerts his utmost power; champagne is furnished at the ship's expense, and gentlemen of limited powers address the company after dinner in very bad speeches. Thus ends the voyage; but how does it begin? For the first few days, the well-seasoned enjoy a monopoly of good things, their companions meanwhile lying in a dreamy, half-torpid, and vegetative state, in nauseous cabins, trying to get their heads lower, and even lower still, loathing the sound of the dinner-bell, and so helpless, that one might without a shadow of resistance on their part, throw them to the fishes. One cold, cheerless morning in March, I lay in my narrow crib on board a Cunard steamer, listening to the sounds on deck, and debating within myself whether or not I could muster courage enough to rise. The state-rooms in these vessels all enter from either side of a long, narrow passage, and the doors are generally left ajar so as to admit fresh air. The steward, whose business it was to arouse the sleepers, was presently heard descending the companion, and never shall I forget the shouts of laughter which greeted him when knocking at the door of a cabin where slept a little Frenchman from New Orleans, and announcing "Eight o'clock, Sir; time to get up, Sir; your trousers at the door, Sir;" he received for an answer, in a tone of calm resignation, "Oh, vell, but take dem away; I sall neber need my trousers no more."

But enough of the ocean, with its grandeur and its discomforts; we have passed Fire Island light, the beams of Aurora now play on the islands of Neversink, a yacht-like pilot-boat tacks ahead of us, and in a short time the telegraph at Sandy Hook will announce in Wall-street that the European steamer is making for the bay of New York. It is the month of August, and a powerful sun, dispersing every vestige of vapour, bathes the landscape in a flood of light; a multitude of small craft with their white cotton sails stud the sea; dense woods on the Hempstead shore remind us of the mirage in the desert, and clouds of canvas, concentrated in one spot some dis-

tance to the right, show us that outward-bound packet-ships are passing the Narrows freighted with the produce of the western hemisphere. Now we are up at the Hook, and the gigantic vessel comes round to starboard: Staten Island, with its noble woods and white villas glistening in the rays of the morning, off the port-beam, and Fort Hamilton, sparkling like an Oriental castle, on the other side of the strait. Behind its batteries rise the sombre pines of Greenwood Cemetery; astern, the cliffs of the Highlands look down on a sandy beach; and around us, ships of every nation, and all sizes, tow-boats, coasting-steamers, lighters, and yachts, move to and fro in the well-buoyed channel. We pass at length the fort, look up to the slopes on Long Island, adorned with groves of cedars and acacias, and, losing sight of the ocean, find ourselves in a majestic lake, at the further end of which a forest of mingled spires and masts marks the site of the Empire City. The panorama is Italian rather than English, and wants only a burning mountain to be finer than the Bay of Naples. It has been my good fortune to visit many finely-situated ports on the European coasts; Genoa, with her marble palaces, backed by the cones of the Apennines; "Old Lisbon," from her hills, overlooking "the expanded Tagus;" Stockholm, on her rocky islands, the Venice of the North; Messina, nestled at the foot of spurs from Etna; Constantinople, reflected in the Golden Horn; but, in some respects, they must all yield the palm to the scene which reveals itself to the traveller when, on a bright American summer morning, he enters the bay of New York.

Perhaps the beauties of nature are rendered still more attractive by the imagination of those who, like myself, believe that no one rightly appreciates the greatness reserved for the western world in the womb of time. Standing on the cliffs of Castellamare, or watching the Adriatic's waves as they roll gently in upon the Lido at Venice, I think of grandeur past and gone, of power long since crushed, of intellectual vigour transferred to

other climes, of ages, never to return, when Virgil dedicated odes to Mæcenas, and the council of the Venetian Republic entertained the monarchs of Christendom; legends of warlike counts and queenly dames pass through my mind; in my dreamy mood I imagine the pomp of chivalry, brave knights taking the crusader's vow, and bards, before assembled kings, singing of Palestine: all the poets and orators, the warriors and statesmen of the olden time, seem again to appear on the theatre of affairs; but the vision is of the past only; I awake and behold a people sunk into a state of semi-barbarism, the tide of literature fast ebbing away from their shores; their spirits broken by years of tyranny, and the palaces where their forefathers held almost regal court mouldering into decay. The lakes and rivers of the New World call forth emotions very different from these. Standing on American ground I think of the future; of the time when these mighty states shall have reached their culminating point, and other great republics shall, with reverence, from them deduce their birth. Here there is neither retrogression nor torpor, but a wonderfully active growth, such as has not been witnessed since the beginning of time. I look through no long vista of years, and behold city domes shining on hill-tops where the eagle now screams, wastes over which the wild wind blows, densely peopled by industrious men, streams yet bearing only the Indian's canoe, and reflecting the tangled foliage of untrodden forests, spanned by bridges of stone, and turned into a thousand channels to drive the busy mill, creeks now inhabited by wild ducks, filled with ships of every nation under heaven, and railroads bearing through the passes of the Rocky Mountains loads of merchandize and men. On the summits of the Sierra Nevada, I hear the hum of civilization approaching from the east; steamers already plough the waters of Lake Winnipeg, and Anglo-Saxons occupy the fertile empire which Cortes conquered for Spain.

CHAPTER II.

Scenery in the United States—Absence of lofty mountains—The great rivers—The "Openings"—Forest lakes—Wooded plains—Alternations of climate—Winter sunsets—Cities and streets—Aqueducts and cemetries—Fires and firemen—Architecture—Absence of neatness—American fondness for locomotion—General remarks on travelling in the Union—The Hotel system.

It is not my intention to weary my readers with a continuous narrative of my wanderings on the American Continent, or to ask them to accompany me in journeys which occupied several months, and extended over very nearly eleven thousand miles. Suffice it to say, that I left few points of interest unvisited, from Chicago to the reefs on the Florida coast, from the mouths of the Mississippi to the State of Maine. The journals of so many accomplished writers who have travelled through the Union have lately been published that I do not feel warranted in adopting the same plan in regard to my notes, but content myself at present with making a few general observations on its physical features, scenery, cities, and modes of locomotion, reserving for succeeding chapters what I have to say on politics, religion, education, slavery, manners, literature, society, manufactures, and commerce, and recommending those who care to pursue the subject to read the valuable work of Sir Charles Lyell, entitled "A Second Visit to the United States," and the still more comprehensive volumes published by the late lamented Mr. Alexander Mackay, and well named "The Western World." For the benefit of those, however, who prefer the narrative style, I intend to select from my note-book some fifteen or twenty of the most interesting leaves, and present them, with rapidly-sketched pictures of scenes, which will remain always indelibly impressed upon my mind.

The most remarkable characteristic of the scenery in

the United States is the absence of lofty mountain chains. Excepting the White Hills, in New Hampshire, there are no elevations worthy of note on this side the dividing range between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans; for the Alleghanies, though occasionally picturesque, may be called mere ridges in comparison with the mountains of continents far less extensive than North America. Here and there you find yourself in a valley bounded by rugged cliffs, where the road crosses and re-crosses the roaring stream, now is lost in woods of recent growth, and again emerges into an open glade planted with wheat or Indian corn; in a few districts you see peaks resembling somewhat those of Norway, Scotland, or the Tyrol; but for weeks and weeks you may travel across unbroken plains, level and monotonous as those on the banks of the Euphrates, or through a country gently undulating, like the sea two days after a gale of wind. In many parts of the Union, there are beautiful landscapes, abounding in all that is requisite to charm a painter's eye, craggy hills, wooded slopes, rocks, waterfalls, and wild chasms, in which the torrent boils; but, in general, nature is tame, and the European longs for an Alpine peak, or a broad-shouldered Ben Nevis. I shall never forget my feelings, when after travelling six weeks in the Atlantic States without seeing a hill, having reached the table-land at the head of the Patapsco valley, on my way from Baltimore to Pittsburg, the wooded summits of the Alleghanies appeared between me and the western horizon. They were a refreshing memento of home, a relief to the never-ending jungles of copsewood and plantations of maize, which constitute the Alpha and Omega of the prospect wherever you wander, from Virginia to Maine. The Americans are not indebted to mountains for their free and independent spirit, as have been so many nations celebrated in the history of the world.

The grandest physical feature of the United States is unquestionably their rivers, almost fabulous in their length of course, navigable to the very centre of the

continent, and overhung by foliage of never-ending variety and hue. New Orleans alone has upwards of seventeen thousand miles of internal navigation on the Mississippi and its tributaries, flowing through climates wide as the poles asunder, and soils whose wonderful fertility give promise of a glorious future. Far away under the lonely peaks of the Rocky Mountains, about latitude 49 degrees, three rushing streams form the Missouri, which, on its junction with the Yellowstone, becomes a noble river, rolling its gray floods over plains where the buffalo and the elk still roam at large, and the Blackfoot Indians drive them headlong into the rifts on the prairie, and satisfy their hunger with hecatombs of the slain. For hundreds of miles it pursues its way over what has appropriately been termed an ocean of grass, a second Nile, long before it arrives at Council Bluffs, or pollutes with its discoloured waves the pure "Father of Waters." The Ohio from the east, the Red River from the ranges of New Mexico, the Arkansas from unknown regions beyond the hunting-grounds of the Chocktaws, the Tennessee and Cumberland watering settled plains, and countless others, of which no catalogue has yet appeared, all contribute their quota to the wealth of that western valley; while the Hudson, the Susquehanna, and the Potomac, on the Atlantic slope, brooks in comparison with the great Mississippi, themselves throw into the shade the famous streams of Europe. By their means the vast continent is opened up to the enterprise of man, and the productions of various climates circulate freely over the length and breadth of the land; Minnesota gets its sugar from the plantations of Louisiana, and the copper of Lake Superior finds its way to manufacturing cities in the older States. The rivers of North America have no rivals in either hemisphere.

Yet the scenery is monotonous on these deep alluvial soils. The virgin earth may yield abundantly, the black loam produce with little trouble green forests of tall maize; but the dense wood looks down on the log

cabin, the log cabin on the corn field, and the corn field on the sluggish stream, in one unending series for hundreds of weary miles, until the traveller longs for a changing landscape, and the settler, as he sits down, wearied with his day's work, under a scorching sun, listening to the chirp of the grasshopper, and the snort of the steamboat, pines for rocks where his forefathers dwelt, and the rushing rapid which foamed and bounded by his mother's cottage door.

Strange as it may seem too, there is often in America a want of trees. They are the natural enemies of farmers in that land of woods; and in some places, accordingly, you see houses and offices exposed to every blast, without a solitary poplar, or a group of chesnuts, to relieve the uniformity of painted boards. Another peculiarity of the scenery is what the inhabitants term OPENINGS; cleared spaces in the forest, which the stranger will be apt to mistake for cultured plains, although they occur in the depths of the wilderness, far from the dwellings of men. Here grows the fire-grass, so much liked by the deer; and perhaps to encourage its springing, and thus allure the game to congregate there, the Indians in former days burnt the forests which once covered these delightful glades.

No one who even casually glances at a large map of the United States, will fail to observe the multitude of small fresh-water lakes scattered in all directions over the country. They derive their supply from springs, and their romantic shores display a gorgeousness of foliage unknown in this older clime. Mighty rivers can trace their origin to a series of sheets of water like these, lying away in the wild forest, showing their tranquil loveliness only to the hunter, as he strays from beaten tracks, guided by the stars. Willows dip over their translucent waves, and in autumn you can trace by its deep scarlet dye, the wild grape-vine creeping to the very topmost branches of the larger trees.

Sometimes as you journey, a height is reached, from which you obtain an extensive prospect of dense woods,

bounded by low rocky hills, and here and there broken into clearings, where a tiny village or solitary settler's dwelling bears evidence to the vigour with which the pioneer of civilization wields his axe. In a few districts the views now and then reminded me of Perthshire and the other Scotch counties adjoining the Highlands; while in more thickly peopled parts neat and cheerful farm-houses, surrounded by orchards of apple and peach trees, legions of turkeys, ducks, and hens, and vast fields of thriving Indian corn, testified to an industrious peasantry and a fruitful soil. In the low lands you drive for miles and miles between fields of maize and clover, diversified here and there with thickets, affording shelter for woodcock, and stagnant pools which form a pregnant source of fever and ague. I have passed for days over a poor soil, covered with low useless brushwood, and again over parks planted with beautiful arborvitæ trees like English lawns, or some of the better portions of Castile. In the slave States, especially, there often occur tracts of country rendered calcined and desert by excessive cropping, the indolence of the white man, and the ignorance of the black. It is pleasant to drive in the summer evenings in the vicinity of the larger cities, through woods and gardens, luxuriant with foliage and teeming with insect life; innumerable white villas, with their green blinds peeping out from groves of maples, oaks, and willows; fruit-trees displaying their tempting clusters; openings in the plantings revealing farm-houses, where peace and plenty seem to dwell; and grassy knolls, deep dells, shady paths, sylvan lakes, and snugly nestled hamlets, forming as many rural attractions to the denizens of a busy town.

In most parts of the Union the fierce sun during the dog days burns up the grass, withers the flowers, and drives men for shelter into the dark recesses of the forest; whilst in winter the same landscape is like Lapland itself, the rivers freeze, the hedges are covered with snow, and the farmer brings out his sleigh to go a marketing to the nearest village. Well do I remember a

day in August, when the deck of a steamer on the Bay of New York felt burning to the touch, and no grove on Staten Island was thick enough to keep out the intolerable rays; and another day in January, when on my return from the land of magnolias and oranges, I sailed up the same bay in a snow-storm, huge blocks of ice floating past us, and the ships appearing like great wandering bergs from the polar seas.

When the temperature of the air is very low, the horizon clear, and no clouds hide the orb of day, how brilliant are the winter sunsets in the United States! Here, in this grey misty atmosphere, we do not expect such dazzling hues; in the tropics the flood of evening sunlight is always the same, soft and bright; but in North America the combined effect of clearness and of cold, produces an appearance so beautiful, that one can almost realize the descriptions of the Apocalypse. The heavens seem transparent as a mirror; earth sparkles as a diamond in a casing of silver, and the light reflected from the sky is, to use the sublime words of Scripture, "like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal."

The cities in the United States have, of course, their individual peculiarities, and those travellers have wearied themselves to describe;—New York with her regular and irregular thoroughfares crowded all day long with omnibuses, drays, and men; the straight streets of Quaker Philadelphia shaded by trees; the rows of quiet but stately mansions which adorn Boston; Baltimore on her hill-top overlooking the Chesapeake; the antiquated wooden mansions of Charleston; Mobile, a straggling village with one business street and one big hotel; New Orleans, a mongrel between Paris and St. Louis; Washington, "the city of magnificent distances," another name for noble edifices scattered on a table-land just reclaimed from the forest; neat and prim Newhaven; austere Salem; Buffalo's spacious streets sweeping down to the lake; Pittsburg, buried in a cloud of smoke; the wide avenues and crescents of

Detroit; the quiet semi-English air of Louisville; Cincinnati, with her workshops, and fleets of steamers; Chicago's lofty stores risen like mushrooms on the shore of Lake Michigan; Lowell and Lawrence, the mere adjuncts of enormous mills. But all these are in some respects alike. They have many characteristics in common which one can scarcely fail to observe. In none of them will you look in vain for white wooden houses, with tiny flower-beds, and green blinds; rows of stately brick warehouses, covered with signs; large shops full of costly goods; telegraph posts as numerous as lamps; huge hotels, with crowds of smokers at their porches; oyster cellars; restaurants; daguerreotype rooms as frequent as public houses in Scotland; advertising vans; open spaces, boarded in, receptacles for rubbish and hens; livery stables, where unwashed wagons and rude harness offend an English eye; wide pavements of wood, brick, or stone; auctions thronged with bidders; stages driven by rough Irishmen, with a rein in each hand, and their coats off; church spires; schoolrooms; public halls; convenient markets; ready-made clothing establishments; residences of doctors, allopathic, homœopathic, and herbalist; heaps of cinders and shavings; bricks and mortar laid down for new erections; fast men sitting behind trotting horses in vehicles which seem to be all wheels; legislators debating at bar-room entrances; porters moving ponderous bales; gentlemen with blue dresscoats and boots which have not been brushed for a fortnight; ladies wearing shawls which we in England are too poor to purchase; and children dressed like miniature men and women, and walking with a ludicrous air of fancied independence.

With very few exceptions, American streets are wretchedly ill-paved and intolerably filthy, so badly lighted that it is dangerous to go out after dark, and so full of holes, that European carriages would not be safe for a week. I have seen ladies over the ankle-step in mud-ruts two feet deep, and chasms large enough to

overturn an omnibus. Even in cities, the inhabitants of which pay heavy taxes for paving and cleansing, these departments are very ill-conducted, and the state of many back and cross streets baffles description. So far from bearing a comparison with England, the Americans in this respect can scarcely claim equality with the foulest towns of Southern Europe. There are lanes in New York worse than any in Marseilles. I lived three days in St. Louis under the impression that the streets were not paved at all, and was only undeceived when a heavy rain washed away tons of mud, and laid bare the rough white stones with which at some distant date the thoroughfares had been macadamized. Wholesale dealers, too, are permitted to place their bales and boxes of merchandize on the pavements before their stores, so that one scrambles rather than walks in the business parts of the cities. The goods are conveyed from the ships or railroads in light cars without sides, drawn by a single horse, having two wheels, and upright moveable posts to support the load. The cabs in the United States are as handsome and showy as gentlemen's carriages, generally mounted with silver, and always exceedingly expensive. The price demanded, and even allowed by law, is in most cases so exorbitant, that I seldom employed them. A stranger will be struck with the well-fed appearance of the horses, both in the hacks and the drays. You scarcely ever see broken-kneed scarecrows like those which limp along the streets of European towns.

In two particulars American cities can well claim an enviable distinction over those of the older world. Their inhabitants have proved themselves "wise in their generation," by providing them at the outset with an abundant supply of pure water, and extramural places of interment.

The Croton Aqueduct conveys an abundant stream at all seasons of the year to New York, from a river forty miles distant, at an original cost of fourteen millions of dollars. It is an inestimable boon to the

population, invaluable in cases of fire, for the use of the public bathing-houses and fountains, and for the purification of the streets. At Philadelphia, a wall of solid masonry has been built across the Sckuylkill, which dams it up, and drives the water into an artificial pond, between which and the bed of the river are six large wheels on a level with the latter, and driven by water from the pond, let in by means of flood-gates. These wheels work a force-pump, which raises the water to four reservoirs on the top of a natural rocky mound, from which it is conveyed in pipes to all parts of the city.

There are no three more sweet and lovely spots on earth than the cemeteries of Greenwood, on Long Island, near New York; Mount Auburn, five miles from Boston; and Laurel Hill, overhanging the Sckuylkill, a short distance from Philadelphia. The first contains two hundred and fifty acres, and all have been selected for the picturesque beauty of their situation. They are pleasantly diversified with hill and dale, forest and lake, and tastefully laid out with drives and walks, thickets and groves, old stately trees and flowering shrubs, arranged by an artist's hand and an eye which delights in sylvan repose. The Americans indeed deserve credit for their choice of sites to serve as the resting-places of their dead. Wandering among their marble monuments, I have often thought how much more suitable these quiet solitudes are than our Scotch churchyards, overgrown with noxious weeds, or the crowded ornaments and tinsel trappings of *Père la Chaise*.

But for the excellent supply of water always at hand, the cities in America would, every now and then, be burnt to the ground. Even as it is, it has been calculated that more property has been consumed by fire in the city of New York, within the last thirty years, than the real estate is worth at this moment. During my residence there, several destructive conflagrations occurred, and not a night passed without an alarm being

given. So numerous, indeed, are these burnings, that the citizens think nothing of them, and the bells may toll for hours before they inquire what is the matter. The number of continuous tolls indicates in what ward the fire has broken out, so that every man may take care of his life and property. The Astor House Hotel was set on fire in 1846, when I was asleep in its third story, and it is not likely that I shall soon forget the sight of the smoke, and the shouting of the firemen on duty. These are volunteers, who pride themselves in their efficiency, and the nobbiness of their engines. Illiberal people insinuate that some of the corps, not unfrequently composed of *rowdies* and mere boys, get up conflagrations for the fun of the thing, and the liquor furnished on the occasion. It is certain that thieves rejoice in them on account of the opportunity afforded for plunder. Many houses are now so slightly built that the firemen cannot with safety enter them, and, consequently, the insurance companies have of late suffered more than usual. A few Americans of my acquaintance entertain grave doubts as to the efficiency of the youthful volunteers who claim and get so much public applause; but this heresy is only of recent origin, and its propagators dare not yet proclaim it on the housetops, lest a storm of public indignation should fall on their devoted heads.

It is scarcely reasonable to expect that a country so new as the United States should be able to boast of many architectural triumphs, and, indeed, most of the edifices, public and private, have been erected more for use than for show. But there are a few remarkable exceptions, redeeming the national taste in the eyes of foreigners, who have been shocked by the numerous abortive attempts to imitate Grecian temples and Elizabethan villas, especially in the vicinity of the larger cities. Girard College, in Philadelphia, atones for a multitude of these minor sins against common sense. It is an oblong structure of the purest white marble, with an over-hanging roof supported by thirty-six mas-

sive, fluted, and lofty Corinthian pillars, the capitals of which struck me as being carved with unusual elegance and skill. Four minor buildings in the same style stand on the ground, and form part of the general plan. The Post-Office and Treasury in Pennsylvania Avenue at Washington are likewise chaste edifices, worthy of the American nation; but the majestic appearance of the Capitol, on its lofty site overlooking the Potomac, throws them quite into the shade. As you approach it, you are struck with the grace of the columns, and the ample proportions of the flights of stairs; while, from the noble dome, elevated nearly two hundred feet above tide-water, a view is obtained which cannot be excelled on the Atlantic slope of America.

Fifth Avenue, in New York, when completed and well-paved, will be one of the finest streets in the world. The stately mansions on each side are mostly of brick, faced with a brown sandstone, which, in my opinion, is handsomer than marble. They all have basement stories, and are indebted for their stately appearance very much to the massive staircases leading to the porches. Rows of trees shade the broad pavements, and here and there a splendid church, surrounded with shrubbery and adorned with creeping plants, rears its spire above the dwellings of the merchant princes. The ecclesiastical architecture of the Empire City will soon attract general observation, and already begins to exercise a beneficial effect even in the far-off districts beyond the Alleghanies.

"In point of cleanliness," says Mr. Alex. Mackay,* "the Americans are in advance of every other people with whom it has ever been my lot to mingle." This is quite true as far as the interior of their houses is concerned; they wash and scrub frequently, and all new erections have bath-rooms and other modern appliances necessary to health and comfort. On only two occasions, in the course of my wanderings, have I had reason to complain of beds, which in every respect were not scru-

* "Western World," vol. iii., p. 167.

pulously clean. The exterior arrangements, however, the pleasure grounds, flower-pots, gravel walks, and offices, will not, in point of tidiness, bear comparison with those of English residences. The clumsy fences, paths overgrown with weeds, extravagant façades of pillars out of repair and sadly in want of paint; the long, thinly-sown grass, the unpruned shrubs, and the broken-down enclosures offend the eye of one accustomed to the apple-pie order of everything about a British villa. There is no prettier village in all the United States than Canandaigua, in western New York, standing as it does on ground gradually sloping down towards a beautiful lake, and surrounded by a district of great agricultural fertility, finally diversified with hill and dale, woodland and water, grass parks and fields of corn;—green lanes shaded by acacias and willows, lead to its market-place; and through pleasant meadows meander brooks which have their source in the silent woods; but even there I was struck with the want of attention to neatness which characterises Americans. The lawns, gardens, porticoes, fences, gates and flower-beds, even of handsome villas, were ill kept; the streets rough and dirty; the pavements covered with mud and tobacco juice; and the carriages looked as if they had not been washed since the previous winter. The untidiness of the poorer classes of native-born citizens has more than once pained me. Often have I seen at the bars of public-houses in country districts, a crowd of idlers, or to use the national term, "loafers," smoking wretched cigars, unshaven, dirty, meanly clad, and displaying on stoves, counters, and backs of chairs, boots which evidently had not been brushed for a fortnight. In the Western cities especially, the absence of comfort about everything strikes the stranger; even the houses of the wealthier inhabitants being often small wooden buildings, painted a dirty white, and situated next door to pigsties, puddles of green water, or mud flats.

A morbid love of moving from place to place distinguishes the American people. They cannot remain for

any length of time quietly at home; but, to use their own expression, "are bound to travel." Consequently, wherever you go, you find the public conveyances crowded; even in Illinois and Missouri, the railroad companies cannot procure cars fast enough to supply the demand of a locomotive public; and not a steamer goes up the great river without a full complement of passengers. "The people of the New World," remarks Miss Bremer,* "are fond of being in company, fond of a crowd." This not only is true, but accounts for several habits not quite intelligible to an Englishman; and so accustomed are they to mix in a multitude, that they do not think it at all necessary to engage in conversation with their neighbours. I have seen fifty men travel together for hours without a single word being interchanged. They have a singular habit of using nautical phrases for land travel, even those of them who have never seen the sea. When a train or an omnibus is about to start, the conductor calls out, "All aboard?" if you intend to make a journey in a stage coach, your friend asks you if you have paid your "passage;" and the floor of a vehicle is usually termed the "deck." With all their "go-ahead" spirit, the Americans bear with exemplary patience delays and disappointments in travelling. I have seen five hundred people in a railroad train, sit quietly reading their newspapers and eating peaches, although the engine, owing to the carelessness of the officials, had broken down in the midst of a forest, and had remained stationary for three hours. Conveyance companies seem to be allowed to act just as they think proper. The grossest negligence calls forth no letters in the newspapers, and travellers never even ask the cause of delays, which in England would immediately bring down upon their authors a storm of public indignation. I once arrived at Sandusky, on Lake Erie, to take the steamer thence to Buffalo, and found that the owners of the mail packet had coolly sent her away in a different direction. Many others were in the same

* "Homes of the New World," vol. i., p. 271.

predicament, but not one except myself expressed his displeasure, or compelled the agent to pay for his unlooked-for detention. In this respect there is a somewhat marvellous affinity between the Americans and the Spaniards. How they expect officials to be attentive and punctual, when such conduct is submitted to without a murmur on the part of those who travel, I cannot well understand. The practices of railroads and steam-boat companies in the United States would not in England be tolerated for a day. Whilst passengers are thus unceremoniously treated, the conveyance of merchandize is both safe and speedy. Sir Charles Lyell mentions that although he sent more than thirty boxes of geological specimens from various places, often far south of the Potomac, and west of the Alleghanies, some by canal, some by river steamers, others by coaches and railways, "not one of them failed to reach without injury his residence in London."* It is astonishing to observe the vast quantities of produce and manufactured goods in course of transit throughout the country; huge steam-boats on the Mississippi and Alabama loaded to the water's edge with bales of cotton, those on the Ohio burdened with barrels of pork and thousands of hams, propellers on the lakes filled with "the finest of the wheat" from Wisconsin and Michigan; canal boats in New York and Pennsylvania deeply laden with flour of various brands; railroad wagons filled with European merchandise; locomotives struggling in western wilds to drag trains richly freighted with the productions of every country under the sun. The United States reminded me sometimes of a great ant-hill which you encounter in the woods, where every member of the community is either busy carrying a burden along a beaten pathway, or hastening away in search of new stores to increase the national prosperity.

The hotels of the United States in some respects illustrate the national character. Englishmen are not gregarious, and care neither for living in public nor for

* "Second Visit to the United States," vol. ii., p. 320.

display in the arrangements of an inn. The Americans on the contrary cannot eat their meals alone, and have little notion of real comfort, although fond of splendour and vastness. Few candid people will deny that our system requires amendment. The charges are much too high: the houses too small; the landlords in general not men of sufficient intelligence and enterprise to conduct establishments in such a manner as will leave them a profit, and at the same time meet the requirements of the present age. British hotels remain what they were in the time of the Tudors, whilst the means of travelling have increased in a wonderful ratio, and all other things have undergone an entire change. On the other side of the Atlantic they have followed the example of our continental neighbours, rather than ours, besides adopting various alterations and improvements according to the wants of the nation. Every small town from Texas to Maine has one or two large hotels, with an office near the door, where strangers on entering register their names and addresses, and on departing pay their bill, being so much per day, without reference to what use has been made of the accommodations provided, a dining hall of great size, two or three handsomely furnished drawing rooms, into which ladies, and gentlemen accompanying ladies are admitted, a reading room, and in those States where there is no stringent liquor law, a bar plentifully supplied with brandy smashes, gin slings, sherry cobblers, and other beverages known only in America. Any person may go in, look over the newspapers, smoke a cigar, meet his friends and hear the news of the day, without any ceremony or that feeling of restraint which too often pervades our social intercourse. The arrivals at and departures from the principal inns appear every morning in the public journals, so that no man need remain ignorant of the movements of his acquaintances. The hotels in the large cities are perfect palaces. The St. Charles at New Orleans is by far the finest edifice in the place. It occupies an entire block, has an under story of massive granite, and a colonnade which may be seen some

miles down the Mississippi. You enter the spacious hall by means of a noble flight of steps, like those which might be expected to lead to a senate house or a university. The proprietor told me he could make up 650 beds. I shall not soon forget my astonishment, when after a long sea voyage, at dusk one fine summer evening I was ushered into the gorgeous drawing-rooms of the St. Nicholas, at New York. The profusion of mirrors, gilding, tapestry, and crystal, fairly bamboozled me. It was more like an introduction to the palace of some Eastern prince, than to a place of public entertainment in a recently discovered world. Every chimney-piece and table slab is of marble; every carpet is of velvet pile; chair covers and curtains are made of silk or satin damask; the looking-glasses are set in frames worthy of Windsor Castle, and the embroidery on the mosquito nettings itself might be exhibited to royalty. I occupied a very small bed-room, the decoration and furniture of which could not have cost less than £200 or £250. In these large houses they print their own bills of fare, employ an army of servants, and on highdays use plated dishes at the public table. The owners are in general men of capital and influence, often occupying important positions in the community. But they attend to their business in all its details, and may be seen, napkin in hand, superintending the arrangements of the crowded table-d'hôte. The St. Nicholas contains 1000 beds, and its white marble front forms one of the greatest ornaments of Broadway. The profits of this establishment during 1854 were reported to be 53,600 dollars; those of the Metropolitan 45,300 dollars; of the Astor House 49,000 dollars; and of the New York Hotel no less than 100,000 dollars. These vast inns have generally an imposing appearance. They are built by capitalists in a style to attract public observation, and then leased to enterprising men for a term of years. It is customary to name the hotel after the person who furnished the money to erect it, as the Mills House at Charleston, the Battle House at Mobile, the Burnet House at Cincin-

nati. The usual charge in the chief cities is 2 dollars 50 cents per diem; in New Orleans, where provisions are high, it is 3 dollars; and in the country it varies from 1 to 2 dollars, according to circumstance. Very few people think of taking their meals in private except regular boarders resident at the place, and many even of them appear at the table-d'hôte every day. In some instances I have been unable to procure breakfast and dinner when I arrived an hour or two subsequent to the fixed hour for the public ordinary. This is a part of the system which needs improvement. Falstaff might after all prefer the Boar's Head at Eastcheap to the finest establishment in the United States. In more particulars than one, a man travelling in America feels inclined to ask, "Shall I not take mine ease in mine inn?" During the hot months of summer all citizens who can afford it leave their town residences to reside at a country resort or fashionable watering-place, where immense hotels have been erected for their special benefit. Six hundred people sometimes sit down to dinner at once in the United States Hotel at Saratoga, and the Ocean House at Newport, and gardens, billiard saloons, ten-pin alleys and colonnades, adorned with all kinds of creeping plants, are attached to most of these monster refuges from the heat and dust of mercantile towns. The smaller wayside inns in America will not please the stranger. Their dirty bar-rooms, ill-cooked victuals, and scantily-furnished dormitories, rather repel than attract. At Springfield, in the state of Illinois, the passengers by the railway-train which stopped there for the night had all to sleep on the floor. I and my family huddled together in the cleanest-looking corner of a parlour, like Bedouins in the Syrian desert. To those, in short, who wish to see the people and live in a crowd, the American Hotel system offers many advantages; one who seeks an approximation to the quietness of home, will soon find it very distasteful. We may profitably adopt it in some particulars; but Englishmen will always prefer comfort to ostentation, and neither economy nor love of display will induce them to spend much of their lives in a barrack.

CHAPTER III.

Internal navigation—Low-pressure steamers on the eastern rivers and lakes—Ferry boats—High-pressure packets on the Mississippi and its tributaries—Racing—Railroads—Criticisms on their management—Increase of accidents—The "Air" lines of Illinois—Changes in the Far West.

Our transatlantic friends are in the habit of boasting that there are more steam-vessels in the United States than in all the world besides. This appears to me a statement the correctness of which cautious men may be excused for doubting; but the wonderful energy of the Americans in respect to internal navigation, will not for a moment be disputed by one who has counted the funnels at the wharfs of New Orleans and St. Louis, who has stood near the lighthouse which guides navigators on Lake Erie to the quays of Buffalo, who from the battery has caught even a glimpse of the bay of New York, and who when camping out on the bluffs of the Upper Missouri, has heard the snort of the high-pressure engine which heralds the white man to the wild Sioux; and who has seen the humming-birds disturbed by a persevering stern-wheel on Georgian creeks, on streams so narrow that the pilot can pluck magnolia flowers, and the branches of forest trees form an arch overhead. The steamers which ply on the rivers and lakes of the United States are so totally different in appearance from those on our own coasts, that mere words can scarcely convey an accurate idea of them to the English mind. They are all slightly built, painted white, and provided with superb cabin accommodations. They are all steered, too, by professional pilots, who stand in a lofty wheel-house on the upper deck, near the bow, and guide the engineer by means of a bell; but here my general description must cease, for the low-pressure floating palaces of the older states and Atlantic seaboard are not more unlike the boats on the Thames than they are the high-pressure

vessels which navigate the Mississippi and its numerous tributaries. During 1853, there were 31 steam-boat accidents in the United States, killing 319 persons and wounding 158; but then almost all these occurred in the south and west, whilst in the north and east travelling by water is nearly as safe as among ourselves. And even on the great river itself, celebrated for fearful explosions and the little value attached to human life, a prudent man need not in general choose a dangerous vessel. The mail packets and regular traders may in nine cases out of ten be relied on as quite trustworthy. As these craft, however, are seldom repaired, but when found insecure, sold to unprincipled speculators who sail them till they sink or burst their boilers, no one should ever venture to take his passage in a steamer which does not belong to the usual line. Occasionally an unlooked-for accident does happen, attended with great loss of life; but, in most instances, the boats which blow up are boats in which no person with his wits about him would for a moment trust himself. The number of independent states on these rivers, and the weakness of their executive governments, account for vessels of this class, owned by men of no character, and managed by desperadoes, being permitted to ply at all. Every year, however, alarming accidents occur on the western rivers, owing to the steamboats striking on snags in the channel,—logs of timber which get fixed in the bed of the stream, and perforate a vessel's bow in a second, when she is steaming against the current. As these constantly change their position, the most skilful pilot cannot always avoid them; and they form a source of danger which will only be entirely removed when the forests at the head waters of the Mississippi and Missouri fall beneath the settlers' axe.

There is nothing which strikes the stranger more forcibly on reaching New York, than the various uses to which the marine steam-engine has been applied on the bay, Hudson, and East River. It drives vessels of every conceivable model and size; huge ocean mail

packets; lighter built ships, employed in the coasting trade; river steamers of vast size, fitted up like palaces; ferry-boats resembling moving bridges; tugs which appear to be all paddleboxes together; barges conveying piles of flour-barrels; vessels, in short, of every description and all possible dimensions. Then some are propelled by side-wheels, some by a screw, and others by one wheel working at the stern; there are low-pressure boats and high-pressure boats, boats like castles in point of height and size, and boats scarcely more elevated than rafts, all steaming along at full speed, and threading their way among the thousand sailing craft at anchor, in motion, or attached to the wooden quays. At a distance, they look like sea-fowl of different shapes and plumage, pelicans and petrels of a variety peculiar to a newly-discovered world.

The system of ferries in the United States is as nearly perfect as any human contrivance can well be, and contrasts very favourably with our clumsy plan. No heaving of ropes, no shouts of "back her," "stop her," no unearthly noises deafen the passengers, but the greatest order, regularity, and method prevail. The steamers are built to suit the wooden piers,—in fact, are bridges driven by an engine at the rate of fifteen miles an hour, with cabins on each side, and two roadways in the centre for carts and carriages, which drive in at one end and out at the other, and thereby reach their destination sooner than if there had been no dividing water over which to travel. The ferries near New York are admirably managed, and pay well. You can cross to Brooklyn every two or three minutes, at a cost of one cent. or a halfpenny, and to Staten Island for six-and-a-quarter cents. In the morning, these vessels are crowded with gentlemen smoking cigars and reading the newspapers, supplied to them by boys waiting on the quay. You pay the fare at a gateway on entering. I have crossed the East River at midnight, with one hundred people. The ferry on the Susquehanna at Havre de Grace presents a somewhat remarkable example

of American ingenuity. The Philadelphia and Baltimore railroad there crosses the river, the locomotive and baggage wagon sliding off the rails on the line to rails laid on the upper deck of a huge ark of a steamboat, thus saving the delay and expense consequent on the removal of innumerable trunks.

Many years ago, the Americans introduced screw-steamers of very light draught of water on shallow streams and on streams where side-wheels would have injured the banks. Most of the small vessels on narrow creeks and rivers, however, are propelled by one uncovered wheel at the stern, driven by long cranks from the engine at the centre of the ship. Even on the Ohio and Mississippi in summer, these boats in a great measure supersede the usual mail packets propelled by paddles, although their rate of speed is much less.

The low-pressure river steamers which ply on the Hudson, the lakes, and in all the northern and western states of America, may, without doubt, be classed as superior in point of speed, elegance, comfort, and convenience to any vessels in the world used for a similar purpose. They ought, long ago, to have been introduced on the Rhine, the Danube, the Ganges, and the Nile, on the Lakes of Constance, Geneva, Zurich, and Como, and other waters navigated by civilized nations. You find them, of course, of various sizes, and differing somewhat as to the internal arrangement; but the finest are from 250 to 350 feet long, have three decks, provide berths for from 300 to 500 passengers, and, in favourable circumstances, average eighteen to twenty-two miles an hour. It is worth crossing the Atlantic to see the 'Francis Skiddy,' with her four funnels, enormous paddle-wheels, and brilliantly-lighted saloons, start on the North River. The captain tingles his bell, the man at the gangway shouts "all aboard," and the huge vessel moves on in majestic silence, like an enormous animal of unwonted powers. These ships all draw little water, and are very sharp at the bow. The upper saloon, extending from the stern to immediately below the wheel-

house within a few feet of the cutwater, is furnished with a sumptuousness which surprises a European. Velvet-pile carpets, pianos, reading-tables, couches, and *tête-à-tête* chairs, make one fancy himself in a Parisian saloon; the state-rooms enter from this splendid apartment, and, in the centre, the engine is boxed off by mahogany panelling. The captain's office, bar-room, ladies' drawing-room, pantries, &c., occupy the main-deck, while below is a public apartment extending from stem to stern, with beds all round, where the meals are served. Most of these vessels are pictures of neatness and order; everything is kept scrupulously clean; and, when proceeding at the rate of twenty miles an hour, you experience very little sound or motion. I have stood on the hurricane or upper-deck of one of these floating palaces, going so fast that the resistance of the air made it impossible to face the bow without shelter, and seen her, two minutes after the tinkling of a little bell, lie still as a phantom-ship on the water. No disagreeable sound was heard, no escaping steam deafened the passengers, no shouts and bawlings awakened sleepers as on board our British packets; everything was done systematically, silently, and well. I shall not soon forget a voyage in the 'Buck Eye State' from Buffalo to Detroit, on Lake Erie. She was to leave the former city late in the evening, and fortunately, I had secured a state-room early in the forenoon previous to the arrival of the eastern cars; for, by eight o'clock, the captain's office was blockaded with people wanting sleeping apartments, and, for three hours afterwards, the deck presented a scene of confusion impossible to describe. No fewer than 600 passengers, having several tons of luggage, were striving to get near the steward's window for the chance of securing berths, elbowing each other without ceremony, vituperating agents who had sold them false tickets, and bewailing their hard lot in being compelled to sleep on the floor. Then there were many groups of deck-passengers preparing their coarse blankets and buffalo-skins to keep out the

dews of the night, men, women, and children, huddled together in every corner which promised protection from the wind. Amidships, and forward, the deck was covered with boxes, bales, barrels, carts, horses, cows, pigs, dogs, in fact, merchandise and live stock of every description. Such a scene as this may be witnessed each evening of the week at any port on the great eastern rivers or lakes of North America.

There is as much resemblance between a modern line-of-battle ship and Noah's Ark as between any steamer now afloat on European waters and the high-pressure boats which ply in the valley of the Mississippi. They are simply barges, drawing from four to seven feet water, supporting, by means of upright beams, a long, narrow, wooden house, which consists of a saloon with state-rooms on each side, and ladies' apartments at the stern, separated from the principal cabin by folding-doors. Each of the sleeping-rooms has also another door opening on a gallery, where the passengers can lounge and enjoy the scenery. The roof of the saloon forms the hurricane-deck, a promenade unprotected by railings, and generally covered with soot and charcoal. Two rusty funnels and the wheel-house rise above it, and there you can enjoy an extensive prospect of the surrounding country. The engine works on the lower-deck without any covering, and is spread over as much space as possible, in order to prevent the vessel drawing too much water. The machinery of these ships costs very little money in comparison with that of low-pressure steamers, and, therefore, they prefer it, in a country where there is much enterprise and little capital. Behind the boilers, the cargo and deck-passengers are stowed away; alongside of them are huge piles of firewood, which costs two dollars a cord. Stalwart negroes may be seen, night and day, feeding the fires unceasingly with pine-logs. During the hours of darkness the sparks, emanating from the funnels and floating in the air, are quite beautiful. They look like myriads of fireflies. You scarcely see the hulls of the vessels at all,

the deck protruding greatly over the gunwale, so as to carry as much cotton, tobacco, and flour as possible. All the movements of the machinery are guided by the steersman, who communicates with the engineer by means of little bells. He tolls the great bell on the hurricane-deck once when he wishes the men to commence or to cease sounding, twice when he meets another steamer, and several times when he wishes to land or take in passengers. He will stop anywhere on the bank where the water is deep enough to enable him to run the steamer's bow up to the shore. On approaching a large town, or a place where freight has to be landed, the steam-pipe utters a terrific howl, like the roar of a dozen African lions. Numerous flat-boats, with wood for the steamers, lie at various points on the banks. When a packet gets short of fuel she is steered in shore, takes one of these barges alongside, and drops it astern when the wood has been put on board. Most of the Mississippian steamers are built at New Albany, in Indiana, and last from three to five years. They cost 6000*l.* to 12,000*l.* The pilots get 120 dollars to 150 dollars per month. The crack boat, in 1853, was the 'Eclipse' of 250-horse power, with berths for 400 passengers. It is not uncommon for the transient steamers going up the Arkansas or the Missouri to ring a bell and blow off steam three days before starting; and, after they have really left their moorings, to remain a day or two at intermediate stations, looking out for freight and passengers. A man may be seen rushing down the levee at St. Louis, carpet-bag in hand, panting in his haste to catch a steamer which, in fact, has no intention of departing for a couple of days, or, at least, till her berths have been all taken. A stray Englishman, now and then in the western country, gets most decidedly "sold," and a natural display of virtuous indignation only makes his position doubly unpleasant. There is no medium between a United States mail-packet and a craft, the movements of which are as uncertain as those of the piratical rovers of Scandinavia.

On the Atlantic seaboard, as well as in the Mississippian valley, American steamers occasionally race, when tarred-wood, lard-barrels, Ohio hams, or any other combustible material which may be at hand, is thrown into the fires, and passengers, in the excitement of the moment, encourage the reckless disregard of life and property shown by the officers. I, myself, was on board a vessel on the St. Lawrence, belonging not to the United States, however, but to Canada, when the deck was so hot that we could not walk on it, and gangs of men were employed to throw water from buckets over the timber near the engine, to prevent it breaking out in a blaze. But such scenes are, every year, becoming less frequent, and not one-half of the current stories in regard to them may be considered worthy of credence. Strange things, now and then, do occur on the western waters, but the credulity of European travellers offers a tempting bait to Americans, and you often hear intelligent Englishmen relating tales about recent steamboat racing on the great river, which, in point of fact, have been standing Joe Millers since the close of the revolutionary war.

The rapidity with which railroads have of late years been formed from place to place throughout the United States, speaks volumes for the practical energy of the people. The number of miles ready in 1846 was 5700; at the close of 1854 there were 13,315 miles in operation, making, with 12,029 miles uncompleted, an aggregate of 25,343 miles, over which we may expect traffic before another twelvemonth has elapsed. The great majority of these are single lines, constructed at as little expense as possible, and therefore very much less durable than ours. In some cases, the rails consist merely of wooden beams laid longitudinally, and shod with iron. In most instances they are light, and so badly graded, that an English engineer would consider it dangerous to travel on them; but then the Americans do not run nearly so many trains per diem as we do, and therefore slighter materials suffice. By economising in the wear

and tear of the plant, as well as of the carriages, they save money to the shareholders, however the public may suffer. Eight per cent. may be quoted as a fair average dividend in the New World. Many lines for a time pay 10 and even 15 per cent., but being imperfectly constructed, require in the course of a few years to lay aside a large sum for repairs. The insufficient and ricketty-looking character of the bridges will strike a stranger from the old country. They are all of wood, and often have no parapet or side-walk. The Philadelphia and Baltimore line crosses two wide estuaries, that of the Bush River, three-quarters of a mile broad, and that of the Gunpowder, upwards of a mile-and-a-half in width, on frail erections, over which a Highlander would scarcely venture to urge his pony. The excessive meanness of the station-houses will also attract notice. The majority of them are mere sheds, scarcely watertight, and generally not a little dirty. The Washington terminus is a perfect pigsty; that at Albany resembles the stables of a carter in poor circumstances; here and there the train starts from the middle of a street, tickets being sold at a neighbouring shop, and in Georgia on one occasion I found the locomotive and cars waiting for us in the midst of a field of Indian corn, no edifice of any sort being in sight. All these imperfections and inconveniences will, however, in course of time, be remedied; the railroad works at Cleveland, on Lake Erie, already remind one in point of extent and system of those in England; at Indianopolis, five companies have joined and built a handsome station, on the same plan as ours, and at the great Eastern cities improved termini are in progress. Very few American railroads have any fence; consequently, cattle, horses, and pigs perpetually stray on the line and retard the engine. I have over and over again, too, seen a train stop to take in a passenger who waved his hat or handkerchief to the driver. Most persons know that the Americans do not use carriages of the same construction as those in Europe, but long cars, each holding about

sixty people, and resting on two axletrees which branch off at the extremities to support eight wheels. There is a passage down the middle, and a door at both ends, so that you can walk about while the train is in motion. A portion of all recently built cars is partitioned off as a retiring-room and closet for ladies, and in hot weather, a barrel of ice-water is provided for the accommodation of passengers. At the stations, boys selling peaches, apples, nuts, gingerbread, lozenges, newspapers, guide-books, maps, and tracts, rush through the cars advertising their various wares. Every train in the United States can be stopped by the conductor, or even by any passenger who may be ill, by means of a cord carried along the roof of each carriage, and attached to the bell on the locomotive. The rate of speed even of the best-made lines, seldom exceeds twenty-five miles an hour; I once took seven hours and a half to travel eighty-eight miles, during a cold, frosty night, in Alabama. On some tracks there are deep cuttings and innumerable plank bridges over ravines; but generally speaking, the evenness of the surface, the cheapness of the land, and the plentiful supply of timber, have enabled the Americans to construct tolerable railroads at very little expense. Of course they could not have built them at all without Irishmen, "the hewers of wood and drawers of water" of the present stirring age. The long cars are more noisy than our English carriages, and in a bright sun not so pleasant, on account of the number of their windows. On the other hand, they admit more fresh air in close weather, you see the country better from them, and over a well-laid track, they are smoother to travel in, always excepting at the curves, the abruptness of which would not be permitted by British law. Those of the Erie line, on the banks of the Delaware, try one's nerves most unmercifully. The engineers work, not in the open air, exposed to all kinds of weather, as with us, but in a wooden house with large windows. The locomotives burn wood, and have consequently huge chimneys. Some of them have a path protected by a railing, on which

the driver can walk round them when they are at full speed. They snort rather than whistle, as a signal of their approach. Travelling in the United States has gone ahead of the facilities offered by the railroad companies who have not improved, altered, and added as they ought to have done, but attempting to do a great business at little cost, have put in jeopardy the lives of passengers. Many have yet only a single line, although long ago the traffic on them required a double one; stations have become too small, officials are overworked and underpaid, and hence all sorts of irregularities daily occur. When I was first in America—in 1846—railway accidents were almost unknown, whilst in 1853 there were no fewer than 138, killing 234 persons and wounding 496. For this the public have themselves to blame. By exposing through the medium of the newspapers instances of carelessness and neglect, by fining the companies and punishing the officials with severity when lives have been lost, they might have, ere now, checked the recklessness of those on whom such a serious responsibility devolves. I have seen mere children in charge of a switch at the passing of express trains, and signal-lamps omitted to be placed on the last car when the engine had given way in a wood at night, with another one only a few miles behind it, and nearly one thousand passengers in the cars. The conductors on American railways have far too much in their power, from the habit which the people have acquired of travelling without purchasing tickets, and from so many small stations having no clerks. Several of these men have become rich with very suspicious suddenness, there being no check on them at all, either in the shape of bookkeepers or bills of fares. They charge the country people in many instances just what they please, make hay while the sun shines, and then "vamoose" to the new settlements beyond the Mississippi.

Travellers do not require in the United States as in Great Britain to be constantly looking after their luggage. As soon as a man enters a station, a brass

ticket with a number on it is attached by a leathern strap to his trunk, and a duplicate ticket handed to him, on presenting which at the end of his journey, he gets his portmanteau without the trouble of taking care of it, or the probability of its being lost. Many of the railroads now in the course of construction on the level prairie lands of the west, are what they call "air" lines, *i.e.*, lines without any curves whatever. The Illinois Central, when completed from Chicago to Cairo, at the junction of the Mississippi with the Ohio, will form a straight line 475 miles long. This plan, it is believed, will effect a great saving in the wear and tear of engines, cars, and rails, but it by no means adds to the charm of travelling. They are a remarkable feature in the rapidly advancing civilization of those vast regions between the Missouri and the Lakes, developing the agricultural and mineral resources of the best parts of the Union, and encouraging the settler to cultivate lands which require neither clearing nor manure, but have hitherto been too far removed from the markets of the larger cities, on which the farmer depends.

Let us pause here, and look on these "Gardens of the Desert," as they were only sixty years ago, when, undisturbed by the snorting locomotive, and covered with herbage, they afforded pasture-ground for the buffalo, meadows painted with flowers, over which the prairie wolf scampered in pursuit of his prey. The Indian built his wigwam beneath the earthy temples of a previous race; the deer fed peacefully among the tall, thick grass; the war-whoop summoned the chieftains to the battle, and the vultures to the field of blood; dense forests and wild lakes separated these rich deposits from the covetous eyes of the whites. Not a sail glanced on the rivers between the glades of the wood, not an axe injured the maples, not a plough turned up the wealthy soil; "the Iron Mountain" remained undiscovered beyond the "Father of Waters;" the lead mines were unknown; the falls of St. Anthony drove no utilitarian mills, and noisy steamers did not interfere

with the red man's canoe. But the pioneer of the wilderness was at hand; the west wind had wafted towards his log-hut the aroma of flowers; his keen eye detected a land flowing with milk and honey; he gave the signal to his fellows, and the advanced guard of the Anglo-Saxons asserted their claim to the soil. For a time a bloody warfare raged; but the contest was unequal and not long. The buffalo crossed the Mississippi, townships were formed, the forests fell, and the Indian at the burial-place of his fathers sadly murmured—

"They waste us,—ay—like April snow
In the warm noon we shrink away;
And fast they follow, as we go
Towards the setting day,—
Till they shall fill the land, and we
Are driven into the western sea."

CHAPTER IV.

Political Constitution of the United States—Federalism—The Senate and House of Representatives—A Reception at the White House—The Presidential office—Parties in America—Capacity of the people for self-government—The despotism of a pure democracy—Politics a trade—Political corruption.

The United States of America constitute, as is well-known, a Federal Republic composed of thirty-one free and independent commonwealths, which have executives, judiciaries, and legislative assemblies of their own. The general government consists of a president, vice-president and cabinet council, aided by a numerous official staff,—and congress, of a senate and house of representatives, who meet in Washington on the first Monday of December. Two members chosen by the legislature of each state constitute the senate. They hold office for six years, one-third of them being elected biennially, and the vice-president, *ex officio*, presides over their deliberations. The people elect the house of representatives by a direct vote, a certain number being apportioned to each state after the census returns, made every ten years. The number is fixed at 234, so that

the constituencies and not the members increase with the population. The term of retaining the appointment is two years. It is not my intention to enter upon an analysis of the American constitution, or to weary my readers with a detailed description of a political machine, which so far from being simple and capable of easy explanation, as we in Europe generally suppose, is one of the most complicated, yet ingenious and practically perfect that has ever been devised by the mind of man. It would be tedious to my readers were I to convey minute information here on such a theme; but no educated person living in this stirring age should neglect to study a subject so well worthy of consideration and so important in its bearings on the colonization and government of the world. In some countries federalism seems the only system which unites the prosperity and freedom of the parts with a vigorous nationality of the whole, which reconciles a diversity of interests to a consolidation of power, which enables provinces differing from each other in climate, customs and laws, to form strong nations, influential in all quarters of the globe. How many empires have prematurely fallen because the natural operation of the central principle spreads dissatisfaction in districts removed from the capital! How often have municipal institutions saved commonwealths which, but for *their* conservative tendency, would have shared the fate of Assyria and of Rome! "The federal system, however," says M. Guizot,—I translate from his 'History of Civilization of Europe,'—"is one which certainly requires the highest development of reason, morality and civilization in the society for which it is intended." In a few years the state of Canada, of South Africa, of Australia, and of New Zealand may render it necessary for Englishmen to pay a little more attention to a question which already begins to excite some degree of interest in these colonies.

The congress of the United States attends only to matters which affect the well-being of the union in

general, such as relations with foreign governments, the sale and management of the public lands, the Mint, the Custom-house, the Post-office, and the military establishments, leaving all affairs of a purely local nature to the senate and house of representatives of each individual state. The constitutions, laws, ordinances and arrangements of these separate commonwealths differ in many particulars. They agree only in one, viz., the universal recognition of the political equality of man. An American acquires his first experience of public life in his native township or city; then he obtains a seat in the legislature of the state, and his hopes are crowned when he is elected a member of the national congress at Washington.

It was my good fortune to be in that city during the discussion of the Oregon question, in the spring of 1846. Both houses were in session, and I heard several interesting debates. The senate meets in a semicircular chamber in the Capitol, the members occupying detached chairs and desks, and strangers a narrow gallery. Composed of men above forty years of age, who are elected for a term of six years, it is swayed neither by the rash counsels of youth, nor by the ever changing caprice of the people. The biennial change of one-third of its number on the other hand infuses new blood into its deliberations, and prevents it unduly retarding legislation, while by no means rendering it subservient to the prevalent follies of the day. In all cases of difficulty, in all national emergencies, when democracy crosses the boundaries of common sense, and runs madly away from restraint, experience has taught the Americans to look to the senate for the salvation of the country. Transacting business quickly, details being managed in committee, possessed of executive as well as legislative functions, the president being unable to act without its concurrence, its calm and habitual dignity contrasts remarkably with the excitement and hubbub too often witnessed in the house of representatives, when fifty members speak at once, resolutions are passed without

consideration, and personal rencontres take place before the speaker's chair; it occupies a high place in public estimation, having more than once by the prudence and maturity of its decisions, and by its firmness after the vote has been taken, preserved the integrity of the Union, and saved the nation from untold calamities. Thus, in 1846, by refusing to pass the belligerent resolutions of the other house, on the North-west Boundary dispute, the senators saved the Republic from unnecessarily embarking in a war with Great Britain, which must have proved disastrous to both powers; and many years before, when President Jackson and the representatives wished to issue letters of marque, for reprisals against France in the matter of the spoliation claims, the senate, under the leadership of Henry Clay, by a large majority declined to sanction the measure. Mr. Mackay remarks,* that "it is as far before the House of Lords, in all that enters into our conceptions of a deliberative assembly, as the House of Commons is before the House of Representatives." This I think is too strongly expressed; but certainly no one can enter the Chamber without being struck with the quiet manliness, the dignified bearing, the intellectual expression of features, and the remarkable phrenological development of the men who direct the counsels of Young America. I listened with a kind of veneration to Mr. Benton, from Missouri, the personification of western ideas, a man singularly like our own lamented Professor Wilson in personal appearance, and like him too in the characteristics of his mind; to Mr. Cass, from Michigan, notwithstanding his anti-British tendencies and ill-natured remarks; to John C. Calhoun, from South Carolina, although the advocate of southern rights and untiring champion of slavery; and on the Whig side to Mr. Clayton, of Delaware, with his strong practical sense; to Mr. Crittenden, one of the most accomplished statesmen in the country; and finally to Daniel Webster,

* "Western World," vol. i., p. 308.

of whose wonderful oratory and profound legal knowledge it would be a work of supererogation to say one word. He, and Calhoun, and Clay, have since been gathered to their fathers; a constellation of great men disappeared all at once from that brilliant sky; but although just at this moment the senate is not so remarkable in point of rhetoric, it retains, those elements of mental and moral greatness which give stability to the institutions of the land. Let us cross the lobby, and, penetrating into another wing of the noble Capitol, enter the House of Representatives. How changed the scene! The speaker sits vainly endeavouring to obtain order, an honourable gentleman in possession of the chair is addressing to a few intimates around him a speech really intended for the edification of his constituents in the West, at all events wholly inaudible amidst the Babel of tongues which amazes the stranger. The other members are collected in groups laughing and talking aloud, reading the newspapers, walking up and down the floor, sitting chewing tobacco with their legs on the backs of chairs, or pitching wafers and paper pellets at each other out of the inkstands. To make confusion worse confounded, it is the practice on finishing a despatch, or letter intended for the post-office, or for delivery in the building, to summon the boys employed as messengers by striking the flat side of the epistle with great force on the desk, and thereby producing a sound like the sharp report of a musket. One might as well harangue an audience below the precipice of Niagara, or during a heavy cannonading, as endeavour to make himself heard in such an indecorous assembly. Yet now and then a comparative lull takes place, and during these angel's visits I heard the shrill tones of old John Quincy Adams, the graceful periods of Winthrop, and the business-like statements of Joseph R. Ingersoll. There are clever men, and easy and correct speakers in this curious crowd, sitting side by side with persons of limited education and gifts, persons of similar taste and attainments to the honourable

able member, who, during one of my visits began his oration with the striking sentence, "Mr. Speaker, I am no lawyer, no, sir; I am a harness maker, and proud to confess it." And can we wonder at the vulgarity, and ignorance, and violence often displayed on the floor of the House of Representatives, when we consider the character of the constituencies, and the districts from whence the legislators come; lumber men from the cold forests of Maine; demagogues sent by the low Irish of New York; crossbreeds between Spaniards and Indians from the swamps of Florida; French Creoles from New Orleans; wild frontier settlers from the Red River; stolid Germans from Upper Pennsylvania; pioneers of the wilderness from the banks of the Missouri; Saxons and Dutch, Italians and Celts, a motley representation of nations, peoples, and tongues, as varied as that which surrounded Napoleon in the zenith of his success, or visited London during the Exhibition of 1851. Then the eight dollars per diem allotted to each representative, enable men to enter the House who are not independent; western farmers, as well as New York merchants, rough mechanics, no less than the planters of the South. All ranks and conditions of life, all employments, professions and trades, may find themselves represented in this deliberative chamber, to which we may appropriately apply the language of Burke to the National Assembly of France: "It has not even the physiognomy and aspect of a grave legislative body—*nec color imperii, nec frons erat ulla senatus.*" Yet, uncouth and singular as are its manners, it is a faithful mirror of the country itself; among backwoodsmen in frieze garments, and seedy-looking individuals whose coats want buttons, and are rather the worse of the wear, may be found those who have attended the levees at St James', and danced in the Tuileries with the court dames of France—men of polish and accomplishments who, in troublous times, make themselves heard above the din caused by rudeness and ignorance, and who, too few in number to give a *general* tone to the deliberations

once and again, by the force of talent and superior education, recal the assembly to order and self-respect. During my stay at Washington, I attended a reception given at the White House by President Polk, and had the pleasure of conversing for sometime with that gentleman. No ceremony is observed at the levees of the chief magistrate of the great republic. I drove up to the door in a very shabby cab, sent the only servant in the hall, an Irishman, whose livery seemed to have been made for his predecessor in office, into the room for a friend, a member of congress, and was by him introduced to Mr. Polk and the other notables present.

The president and vice-president of the United States, are elected for a term of four years, by an electoral college, composed of delegates from the several states, according to their population. These are chosen by a vote of the people. Ranke, in his *History of the Popes*,* remarks that "the choice of a pontiff, like many other promotions, was gradually made to depend on who had the fewest enemies, rather than on who possessed superior merit." Exactly the same thing may be said about the choice of a candidate for the presidential chair by the respective parties in America. They nominate not a statesman like Henry Clay, or Daniel Webster, or John C. Calhoun, who, in the course of a lifetime devoted to political struggles, have made many foes as well as many friends, whose sentiments are too publicly known on minor points, in regard to which there is difference of opinion in the same ranks, but persons of less notoriety, whose views on some questions no one knows, and who will command the undivided votes of the party, as being simply Democrats or Whigs. The contest in 1844, was between Henry Clay and James K. Polk; the former one of the most illustrious politicians of his age; the latter an individual of whom few had even heard until his election, shortly before, as speaker of the Lower House. The veteran

* Bohn's "Standard Library," vol. ii., p. 107.

Kentuckian would not have been afraid of the talents of Calhoun; Van Buren's reputation might have been turned against himself; but no sooner had Clay been informed who his opponent was to be, than he said, "I am beaten," for he knew that the comparatively unknown candidate would command the suffrage of every Locofoco in the land. But whilst it has become almost impossible for a leading statesman to obtain the highest honour which his country can bestow, that dignity has of late been more than once awarded to military heroes. The Americans, notwithstanding their republican simplicity, and dislike to standing armies, are in common with other nations, too easily dazzled by the glory of conquest, and blinded by the excitement of war. The martial exploits of General Harrison gave him, in 1840, an unwonted majority; in 1848, Zachary Taylor, commonly called "Old Rough and Ready," although no politician, triumphed over his adversary, as the conqueror of Buena Vista, whose achievements in arms gratified the vanity of a people thirsting for fame. No Whig could refuse to vote for him on account of his obscurity as a statesman, whilst a few democrats tendered to him their suffrages as the Wellington of the West. In 1852, both candidates were general officers; neither of them had figured in the senate, but Pierce, as well as Scott, had fought in the Mexican war.

Political parties in the United States seem, to a European, so much divided and subdivided, and the various sections assume names, so apparently unmeaning and strange, that he gives up in despair the attempt to understand their differences. Many Englishmen have lived years in New York, without in the least comprehending the distinction between Whigs and Democrats, Federalists and Locofocos, Freesoilers and Native Americans, Barnburners and Old Hunkers, Hardshells and Softshells. These represent shades of opinion on particular questions, which we shall not now stay to discuss; for every citizen of the republic, whatever may be his sentiments on certain measures, belongs to

some extent to one of the two primary divisions of Whigs or Democrats. The point originally contested between them was the rights and authority of individual States in relation to the Federal government. The latter were very jealous of the central power; the former inclined to give greater consolidation to the united republic by encroaching on the prerogatives of the separate commonwealths. This subject, however, now seldom occupies public attention, although the great parties are never at a loss to find questions on which to fight their battles and measure their strength. The Whigs may be styled the Conservatives of the New World, their principal support being derived from the rich merchants, the old planters, the monied interest, and the manufacturers; whilst the Democrats rely on the tradesmen, the operatives, and the immense population employed in cultivating the soil.

It is impossible for any one to study the institutions and past history of the United States, without confessing the remarkable capacity of the people for self-government. In the West, as well as on the Atlantic seaboard, churches, schools, hospitals, benevolent societies, newspapers, libraries, and court-houses keep pace with the numerical and material growth of the community; legislative ability seems inherent in the race; and, notwithstanding the enormous immigration of ignorant persons from Europe, no fewer than 285,000 of whom landed in 1853, at New York alone, not only has government been able to perform its functions, but the country has obtained a high place amongst the nations of the earth. I can conceive of no spectacle displaying in a greater degree the elements of grandeur, than twenty-three millions of men, educated, intelligent, and industrious, enjoying the freest political privileges, and yet without the presence of a standing army, setting an example of order to the civilized world.

It remains for me to notice some things in connexion with American politics, which to an observant and thoughtful Englishman, however partial to his trans-

atlantic brethren, do not appear worthy of praise, and of which many great and good men in the republic speak with reluctance and regret.

Twenty-two hundred years ago Aristotle observed that a democracy has many striking points of resemblance to a tyranny, and Mr. Burke, writing on the same subject, remarks,* that "the majority of the citizens in a republic is capable of exercising the most cruel oppressions upon the minority." Conversant as we are in this country with the conflicts between whigs, tories, and radicals, with the excitement of election contests and the bitterness of political strife, we have no idea how severe and exacting a despot is Party in the United States. It permits no individual action, exacts a slavish obedience, and represses freedom of opinion with as high a hand as Marshal Radetsky or the Russian Czar. Should a man, no matter how talented and valuable as a leader, refuse to give up his own private views at the bidding of this tyrant, and decline thus to be dragged at his chariot-wheels, he loses for ever his weight and influence, listens to the execrations of thousands who formerly hung on his lips, and is hurled ignominiously from office and power. It is a strange anomaly that in free America, a politician cannot, without degradation, think and vote as he pleases, but must stand by the banners of whiggery or locofocoism through good repute and bad repute, in contests of which he disapproves no less than in those which commend themselves to his ideas of right. Such a bondage naturally tends to deaden the influence of principle, and corrupt the moral sense. It accounts for some episodes in American history not very creditable either to the legislature or to the people. In this particular, the better informed amongst our transatlantic friends know right well that there is far more liberty enjoyed under the shadow of England's old time-honoured monarchy than in the model republic, with all its respect for the individual rights of man. Nothing mortifies

* "Reflections on the Revolution in France."

Jonathan more than to hear a person brought up under a constitutional government in Europe complain of tyranny in the working of institutions, so often vaunted as the freest on earth. Again, there exists in the United States a class of men who make politics a trade, who frequently manage to obtain an ascendency in the national and the state legislatures, and whose acts impress strangers very unfavourably in regard to their fellow-countrymen in general. These men are always ready to raise a popular cry to subserve their own ends; they clamour for justice and principle, whilst they want the emoluments of office and the distribution of patronage. No doubt every American is to some extent a politician, and takes some degree of interest in the government of his country; but in too many instances legislation gets into the hands of the body in question, and then the upright, intelligent citizens, disgusted with their proceedings, keep aloof from public matters altogether, and in so doing, of course, increase the evil which they deplore. Burke, in characterising the National Assembly of France, in the revolutionary times, says, "There were distinguished exceptions; but the general composition was of obscure provincial advocates, of stewards of petty local jurisdictions, country attorneys, notaries, and the whole train of the ministers of municipal litigation, the fomenters and conductors of the petty war of village vexation." This description applies but too forcibly to the many legislative bodies in America. Often have I heard the fact mourned over, but no remedy seemed to suggest itself to those who spoke of it, except the somewhat violent one advocated by Dick the butcher, in King Henry the Sixth, who, addressing Jack Cade and his associates, exclaims, "The first thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers."* The British House of Commons, with all its faults, represents the worth and intelligence, and commands the respect of the nation. To obtain a seat in it is the highest ambition of many who would consider

* *King Henry the Sixth*, Part II., Act iv., Scene ii.

it no honour whatever to associate with American representatives. In the United States there are both merchants and planters who profess it beneath their dignity to engage in political contests; we all know that in England the noblest and proudest in the land require no inducement to offer their services to constituencies, and to secure a place in the legislature of their country. But in the Great Republic a class of men have sprung up, who devoted to a *party-ocracy* as unprincipled as the autocracies of Europe, and intimately acquainted with the machinery which guides it, exercise a paramount influence in legislation, regard state offices as belonging to them by right, and make politics a simple affair, not of principle, but of dollars. I have heard good men and true on the other side of the Atlantic apply to posts under their government, language very similar to that used by Dr. Chalmers,* when he characterised another institution as "a mere congeries of offices, by which to uphold the influence of patrons, and subserve the politics or the views of a worthless partisanship." This leads me further to notice an abuse which I sincerely regret to say has crept into legislation on the Western Continent, and which I cannot describe better than by quoting the first paragraph of an article upon it in Harper's Magazine, one of the ablest periodicals published in the Union :† "*Political corruption*—why has it become a jest and a bye-word amongst us—a settled phrase denoting a fixed fact in our history—a fact now conceded by all parties, and which no intelligent man ever thinks of denying? We hear it from all sides. There is political corruption, and that too on the broadest scale—corruption in all parties—corruption in leading partisans—corruption in political measures—corruption in political services—corruption in the dispensation of offices—corruption in the management of the press—corruption among almost the entire class of those who may be called politicians by profession—a growing corruption, or, what

* "Life," by Dr. Hanna, vol. iv., p. 243.

† December, 1853.—*Editor's Table.*

is equally bad, a growing indifference to corruption among the masses of the people." This is startling language, but truth compels me to say that it was a common theme of conversation and a common subject of complaint in intelligent circles during my last visit to the United States. Mr. Mackay* refers to "the propensity for jobbing discovered by the federal authorities," and adds, "indeed, in this respect, I have heard several Americans declare that they believed their own government to be the most corrupt on earth." This appears to me too strong a condemnation, but the disease prevails in the state legislatures and in the councils of the various cities just as much as at Washington. No one in New York seemed for a moment to doubt the alleged jobbing and trickery resorted to in obtaining privileges from the civic rulers. Leading men of every shade in politics informed me that offices and favours were there openly bought and sold; that aldermen and councilmen accepted these situations for the avowed purpose of getting quickly rich; and that jobs every week were there perpetrated with impunity which in this country would bring to disgrace every person connected with them. I believe that as great corruption exists in the government of that city as was ever brought to light in the days of the Stuarts: and what is more, I have heard people defend it on the ground that in America all can at one time or other share in the plunder, whereas in Europe public robbery was the privilege of the few. Within the limits of that municipality murders are of frequent occurrence, prisoners constantly escape, and highway robberies are neither few nor far between, whilst the police force in 1853 cost more than a million of dollars. In 1852 both sections of the democratic party combined to elect Franklin Pierce president of the United States. No sooner had he assumed the reins of power than they again quarrelled about the division of the spoils, and ever since a most unseemly controversy has

* "Western World," vol. i., p. 264.

raged in regard to emoluments and offices. A few years ago the same parties made a stalking-horse of principle; but now they have thrown aside all disguises, and openly struggle for salaries. "The spoils cabinet," "the disappointed applicants," "the eager expectants," "the hungry politicians;" such are some of the epithets which met my eye in all American newspapers, which were bandied about in congress, which headed placards, and which indicated painfully the state of feeling in America after the formation of the present cabinet. We have in Great Britain many abuses to deplore; but let us be thankful that taken as a whole, there does not exist a more noble-minded and upright body of men than those who constitute our Houses of Parliament.

CHAPTER V.

Payment of representative members—Frequent change of functionaries—Salaries of public servants too low—Stump oratory—The Army and Navy—Desire for territorial aggrandisement—Its advantages and disadvantages—Destiny of the Anglo-Saxon race—Permanency of democratic institutions in America—National prospects of the United States.

It is not for me to say how far the evils alluded to in the preceding chapter may be attributable to two practices which have been adopted in America, but of which many persons in that country do not approve, viz., the payment of members, and the change of subordinate officials at the beginning of every presidential term. It is admitted, on all hands, that the remuneration given to legislators introduces into the state and national assemblies a host of adventurers, chiefly needy lawyers, who prefer getting a livelihood in this manner to seeking it in an industrial pursuit; who reflect no honour on the councils of their country, and who repel men of integrity and standing from becoming candidates for public favour; but then to abolish the fee, say the Americans, would be to disqualify poor men from taking office, and

would thereby violate the democratic constitution of the States. I have travelled with senators, resembling in personal appearance and in dress very much the carters whom you meet in Ireland, men with unwashen and unshaven faces, long, threadbare, frieze great coats, and hats without shape or colour. In some parts of the country, these are considered marks of republican simplicity, and a man to secure popular favour must not allow his wife or daughters to appear in expensive attire, or, as they express it, in "loud fixins." The change of all functionaries holding office under the general government, when a new president assumes the reins of power, is another grievance of which many Americans complain. They admit the propriety of appointing another cabinet and members of government whose opinions coincide with those of the chief ruler, but see no reason why all the postmasters in the Jacksons and Jeffersonvilles throughout the Union should be turned out every four years, or just when they are becoming acquainted with the duties of their situations; why a democrat may not make quite as good an exciseman as a whig; or why it is necessary that the collector of customs, at New York, should be a Softshell and a Locofoco. They think that this system creates a class who carry on a trade in politics, who, out of office, keep the country in a ferment, and who, in office, constitute a mischievous bureaucracy. This principle, too, in some cases, has been applied to the appointment of judges, and, of course, cannot fail to impair the efficiency and lower the dignity of the bench. It may be urged, however, in favour of the plan, that it gives the whole community access to places of trust under government, and prevents the establishment of a permanent body of functionaries like that which exercises such an injurious influence in Prussia and France. I have given both sides of the argument on these two vexed questions, and leave my readers to form their own conclusions.

It appears to me, after a careful examination of the duties performed by the principal officers under the

United States' Government, that their salaries are much too small. It is, no doubt, necessary in a republic to guard against ostentation, and to husband the public resources; but it is also necessary to give men such remuneration for their services as will remove them from all temptation to act dishonourably in a pecuniary point of view, and as will offer an inducement to talent. The President gets 25,000 dollars, or 5000*l.*; the members of his Cabinet 8000 dollars, or 1600*l.* each; the Judges of the Supreme Courts 4500 dollars each, or 900*l.*; and the Ministers Plenipotentiary at Foreign Courts 9000 dollars, or 1800*l.* Since these sums were fixed America has become a great and wealthy nation, and some of her wisest men think that they might be very considerably increased with advantage to the public interest, both at home and abroad.

The historian, Hallam, treating of the tranquillity prevalent in Venice, and, comparing it with the feuds between Guelf and Ghibelin in the republics of Tuscany, observes,* that "the wildest excesses of faction are less dishonouring than the stillness and moral degradation of servitude." Few liberal men will deny the truth of this proposition; but still it must be felt that demagogueism and stump oratory, the inflammatory speeches of persons whom Fenimore Cooper well describes as "fellows, whose mouths are filled with liberty and equality, and whose hearts are overflowing with cupidity and gall,"† have done not a little to bring into disrepute public affairs on the American Continent. The harangues of such agitators, and the wild doings of mobs under their control, reported in European newspapers, afford arguments to the opponents of popular rule, and strengthen the position of despots. In reality, they do not at all represent the feelings of the people, or the social state of the republic; but, besides doing a world of mischief in their own country, they afford foreigners an opportunity of attacking its institutions.

* "State of Europe during the Middle Ages," vol. i., p. 323.
† "The Spy," chapter xxiv.

Englishmen, accustomed to the plain, practical, and business-like addresses for which the House of Commons is distinguished, will not be easily reconciled to the elaborate essays delivered in Washington, or to the inflated superabundance of imagery and bombastic perorations which characterise American oratory. Both in the halls of legislature and in assemblies of the people, speakers use the most extravagant metaphors, wander far away from the subject under consideration into the fields of fancy, and, with that extraordinary fluency which distinguishes the political population, entertain their auditors with a string of highflown words, as meaningless as they are inflated. There is much more freedom of discussion, and much more sound logic in the public meetings of Great Britain than in those of the United States. I attended several during both my visits to the Western Continent, and must candidly confess that the proceedings of all, the self-adulation, the partisan flattery, the personalities, and the discursiveness of those who took part in them, left a very unpleasant impression on my mind. I have preserved a passage in the harangue of James T. Brady, a noted New York lawyer, at a gathering of the National Democrats, held last November in Metropolitan Hall in Broadway, and give it here as a specimen of the nonsense which American stump orators deliver, and American audiences cheer. After a violent personal attack on the leading men amongst the Free Soilers, and especially on John Van Buren, he thus proceeded to excite the sympathies of the two thousand citizens before him, against the father of that gentleman:—"Van Buren! I dislike the name. There was one President of the United States who for ever dishonoured and disgraced our national flag. Remember the burning of the 'Caroline!' Had the American people been consulted on that memorable occasion, they would have raised a mighty shout of freedom, a shout which would have shaken the earth to its very centre, disturbed the order of God's universe, and made this planet of ours fly out of its proper orbit

to describe an erratic course in the regions of infinite space."

It is well known that the standing army of the United States numbers only about 12,000 men, whose duty is principally to guard the forts on its extensive frontiers. The people everywhere profess a repugnance to such a force being made more numerous, as a grievous misapplication of profitable labour, as contrary to the theory of a well-ordered republic, and as dangerous to the national liberties. You hear them frequently on this subject, using almost the identical words which Mr. Pulteney addressed to the House of Commons in 1732; yet they have quite a mania for military distinctions, delight in playing at soldiers, and show anything but a peaceful spirit when they imagine an insult to the star-spangled banner. A successful general becomes at once a national idol; every third man you meet rejoices in the appellation of captain or colonel, and congress have on several occasions displayed a singular eagerness for war. The officers of the regular army must all be educated, and pass the examination at the West Point Academy, on the Hudson; no soldier can rise from the ranks to a command, as under our monarchical institutions, and competent witnesses have frequently testified to the superiority of the British private's condition to that of the rank and file in America.* There are sixty-four ships of war on the Navy List belonging to the general government; but a great many of these are old, ill-constructed, and unserviceable. The Western members oppose an addition to their numbers, and an increased vote to secure their efficiency; but I think a feeling is gaining ground in the country, that the present state of this force is not worthy of a nation which, besides being rich and powerful at home, exercises a mighty influence in every quarter of the globe. The Americans are a nautical people, and, possessed of a powerful navy, they might promote the cause of freedom

* See "Autobiography of an English Soldier in the U. S. Army," vol. ii., p. 307.

and good government in regions where they are as yet comparatively little known. But it is to the numerous and well-trained militia that the nation trusts for the preservation of order, the security of property, and the defence of its homes in time of need. This force, in 1853, was composed of no fewer than 2,284,732 men, and from what I have seen of them in the various States, I must say that many regular troops in the pay of European Governments, will not compare with them in point of discipline or martial demeanour. We all know what their fathers did in the revolutionary war, and I am persuaded that the combined armies of the older world, Cossacks, Croatians, and Gauls, could no more endanger the independence of America, than they could drain the Mississippi or submerge the Alleghanies.

The martial spirit to which I have alluded, manifests itself in the thirst for territorial extension and aggrandisement, which so great a proportion of the people display. When in Washington, some years ago, I was surprised to observe the eagerness with which many politicians spoke of annexing Oregon and marching up to the Russian boundary; Cuba is now regarded as a certain acquisition as soon as events warrant its seizure; the north casts a covetous eye over the fertile plains of Canada West and the navigation of the St. Lawrence; and the south points in return to the magnificent table-lands of Mexico, to its mineral wealth and delightful variety of climate, all of which would be turned to account, were the land possessed by an active and vigorous race. Narrating his experience in the last named country, Mr. Bayard Taylor* says, "The natives acknowledged our greater power and intelligence as a nation, without jealousy, and with an anticipation rather than a fear, that our rule will one day be extended over them." We have all heard of the proposition to annex the Sandwich Islands, and of the negotiations being carried on in Central America. It is, of course, the mob

* "El Dorado," vol. ii., chap. ix.

orators and violent partisans who excite and encourage most this insatiable desire of new possessions; but even amongst moderate and judicious men, a strong conviction exists that the entire northern division of America will in time belong to the Confederation, and their views may be expressed by the well-known couplet:

> "No pent-up Utica contracts our powers,
> For the whole boundless Continent is ours."

Whilst there are those who make acquisition of territory a mere stepping-stone to power, and whilst many vapour about Mexico and Canada from a national vanity, it is undeniable that the annexation of Oregon, Texas, and California, has in one respect been the means of strengthening the foundations of the Union. Had not these vast regions afforded an outlet to the wild, scheming spirits who are so numerous in the other States, the cause of order and good government might long ago have been endangered by their restless ambition. At the mines and in the chase they have found that excitement which in other circumstances might have shown itself in attempted revolutions or in marauding expeditions likely to involve their country in war.

However unjustifiable this lust of empire may be in itself, let us not forget that besides acting as a safety-valve for the intense excitability of the Americans, it tends to promote the civilization of the world, and to fulfil the mission of the Anglo-Saxon race. Only two hundred years have elapsed since the 'Mayflower' cast anchor on the deserted shores of Cape Cod; then the mighty forests were undisturbed, and the "Father of Waters" bore only the canoe of the Indian voyaging to his hunting-ground or fleeing from his foes; gigantic trees covered the wheatlands of Ohio, and where Lowell now stands, on the banks of the Merrimac, the sachems of the red-men convened their warriors, and presided at the midnight dance. The little company of the Pilgrim Fathers landed at New Plymouth, a band of persecuted but upright men; they brought with them those great

ideas which lay the best foundation for national power, and we now hail them as the founders of a commonwealth greater than that ruled by the *senatus populusque* in the palmiest days of Rome. The population of the United States at present amounts to more than twenty-three millions, and her territory extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific, comprises three-and-a-quarter millions of square miles. Since 1840, the increase of the inhabitants has been six millions, or thirty-five per cent., a ratio to which the history of mankind presents no parallel. These surprising results may be traced entirely to the enterprise of Anglo-Saxons. In the Mississippian valley, no less than on the St. Lawrence, the French had settled a hundred years before them; the richest lands and best watercourses, the city sites and seaports were all theirs; but they have long ago yielded the title of superiority to a race who seem to be the only real colonists, and to whose industry, energy, and perseverance civilization owes a series of triumphs more wonderful than the campaigns of Napoleon or the victories which carried Alexander from the plains of Thessaly to the confines of Hindostan. Australia and New Zealand in fifty years may be as great as the United States; we see province after province in Asia bowing to this influence, and surely we may, without violating probabilities, suppose that another century may witness its two representatives meeting to celebrate their successes under the great wall of China. All men acquainted with the tendency of political events out of this continent, look forward to an extension of our race and language over regions now either unexplored or groaning under misrule too flagrant to last. Every year thousands of emigrants leave our shores to people lands at the antipodes, and the younger sons of this energetic family, as if North America were too small for them, carry the star-spangled banner to the regions of everlasting ice, and amid the sunny islands of the Caribbean sea. When we consider that the revolutionary war only terminated in 1783, it is remarkable to observe

the influence which the United States has already acquired among the nations of the earth. Dr. Johnson in 1775 published a pamphlet in answer to the Resolutions and Address of the American Congress, entitled "Taxation no Tyranny." In it there occurs this remarkable passage:—"The numbers of the Americans are at present not quite sufficient for the greatness which, in some form of government or other, is to rival the ancient monarchies; but by Dr. Franklin's rule of progression they will in a century and a quarter be more than equal to the inhabitants of Europe. When they are thus multiplied, let the princes of the earth tremble in their palaces. If they should continue to double and to double, their own hemisphere could not contain them." How strikingly illustrative of these words are the position which the United States has on several occasions lately assumed, the encouragement which she has given to European patriots, her conquests in Mexico, and her expedition to Japan! "There is nothing," wrote Lord Jeffrey* to a transatlantic friend in 1818, "and never was anything so grand and promising as the condition and prospects of your country, and nothing I can conceive more certain than that in seventy years after this, its condition will be by far the most important element in the history of Europe." All unprejudiced men will now readily admit that there is every probability of this prediction being conclusively verified. In the short space of seventy-eight years, America has risen to the rank of a first-rate power, whose merchant-ships are in every sea, whose influence is felt in the old world as well as the new, and whose flag commands the respect of kings and emperors.

Some writers have indulged in much speculation regarding the continuance of the Union and the permanency of democratic institutions on the other side of the Atlantic, and more than one have strangely confounded the two questions together, although the main-

* "Life," by Lord Cockburn, vol. ii., p. 183.

tenance of Republican government has nothing whatever to do with territorial arrangements. The people may still maintain supreme authority, whether the Confederation exist in its present form, or resolve itself into a number of independent but smaller commonwealths. The preservation of the Union may be endangered by causes even now at work, though lost sight of in the midst of general prosperity, in the race for riches, in the settlement of new provinces, and in that resistless tide of progression which distinguishes the youthful nation. The opposition of material interests, the undue extension of territory, the local jealousy of federal interference, the diversity of race and sentiment, and above all, the existence of slavery, are elements of peril which already threaten, and at some future day may rend asunder the Republic. On the other hand, an intense feeling of nationality, the connecting of the various states and climates by means of railroads and telegraphs, the singular skill with which the constitutional machine has been contrived, and the advantage to all concerned manifestly derived from a certain amount of concentration of power, afford no slight guarantees for the perpetuity of the present system. But be this as it may, it appears to me that a careful consideration of the facts of the case will justify all reasonable men in looking forward to democracy as the settled and established order of things on the North American continent. Every American not only thinks his own form of government the best, but he believes that his countrymen are the chosen instruments for working out a great problem in the political history of nations, for manifesting to mankind the ability of a free educated people to govern themselves, for striking the first blow in a conflict which must inevitably result in the overthrow of monarchical and aristocratic power. He has firm confidence in his mission as well as in his principles, and, to use the words of Mr. Mackay,* "Unless the people can be persuaded

* "Western World," vol. iii., p. 333.

to do violence to their feelings, tastes, habits, and associations, and to adopt institutions incompatible with their position and circumstances, there is no fear of democracy in America." Its permanence, however, mainly depends on the moral worth and intellectual enlightenment of the masses, on the vigorous support given to those noble monuments of public wisdom which reflect already so much honour on the United States. An uneducated people cannot for any length of time hold the reins of authority; the very existence of Republicanism in America, all competent witnesses testify, is dependent upon the common schools. On this subject Mrs. Sigourney has written some beautiful lines in a poem called "Our Country."

> "There is thy strength,
> In thy young children, and in those who lead
> Their souls to righteousness. The mother's prayer
> With her sweet lisper ere it sinks to rest—
> The faithful teacher 'mid a plastic group—
> The classic halls, the hamlet's slender spire,
> From whence, as from the solemn gothic pile
> That crowns the city's pomp, ascendeth sweet
> Jehovah's praise; these are thy strength, my land!
> These are thy hope."

The rise and progress of the United States appears to me the greatest and most important political fact of this century, the beginning of a new era in governmental arrangements, the signal for despotic potentates to mark the advancing current in the stream of time. They show the wonderful energy of free institutions, the effects of popular instruction, and the happy results of an active Christianity. Should the Confederation be dissolved, let us hope that it may be amicably, and not by violence, on account of its overgrown dimensions, rather than of its internal debility. Were I Nicholas of Russia, or an official interested in upholding arbitrary rule, I should look with jealousy and distrust on the consolidation of democracy in America, but as a true Briton, a lover of liberty, opposed to tyranny and everything which interferes with the just rights of man, though myself attached

to those institutions under which England has become great, I can overlook minor differences, and sympathize with the American poet when he writes,—

> "The years, that o'er each sister land
> Shall lift the country of my birth
> And nurse her strength, till she shall stand
> The pride and pattern of the earth;
>
> Till younger commonwealths for aid,
> Shall cling about her ample robe,
> And from her frown shall shrink afraid
> The crowned oppressors of the globe."

CHAPTER VI.

Incorrect and caricatured accounts given by English writers on America —Feelings of its people towards Great Britain—Sentiments of the Americans with reference to the Russian war.

Reference has already been made to the incorrect and caricatured accounts of the United States, its institutions, and people, given to us by a class of writers, now happily not so popular as they were some years ago, when it was more the fashion to ridicule and sneer at our friends on the other side of the Atlantic. Travellers of a far higher order have of late done much to remove the impression produced in England by these flippant publications, which, written more to command a sale, by exciting a laugh, than to circulate just ideas regarding the Western Continent, reflect no credit either on their authors or on the many readers who so readily applauded them. To Lord Carlisle, Sir Charles Lyell, Colonel Cunynhame, Lady Emmeline Stuart Wortley, and, above all, Mr. Mackay, we are indebted for much more accurate descriptions of a nation which, with many faults, has also many virtues, and which it would be the height of folly, on our part, either to vituperate or despise. But, though the one-sided and oftentimes absurd stories of former book-makers are gradually being consigned to a well-merited oblivion,

they have caused no little bitterness of feeling between the two countries, which, of all others, ought to draw closer and closer the bonds of amity; they have provoked Americans to write accounts of Great Britain in a similar spirit; they have done sad damage to the cause of rational liberty, and made English credulity a byeword even among the rough settlers of the far west. Nor can our press be absolved from the charge of misrepresenting and calumniating transatlantic affairs. Sir Charles Lyell notices this as a prolific source of estrangement, and every liberal man who has made the tour of the Union, can bear witness to the correctness of his observation. It is gratifying to notice a change in this respect also; but I cannot but think it undignified and unwise in the *Times*, a journal of such standing and influence, to persevere in its hostility to everything American. To show to what extent these views are shared in by other travellers, whose opinions must go far to overcome the prejudices of Europeans, I shall request attention to the following extracts.

"The feelings of the American people," says Mr. Alexander Mackay,* "have been wantonly and unnecessarily wounded by successive travellers who have undertaken to depict them, nationally and individually, and who, to pander to a prevailing taste in this country, have generally viewed them on the ludicrous side." "A large proportion of English travellers in America have a predetermination to turn everything into ridicule, and enter the country demeaning themselves during their peregrinations through it, with an ill-disguised air of self-importance unpalatable to a people who have become jealous from unmerited bad treatment." "Every account of America," remarks Mrs. Houston, in her volumes entitled 'Hesperos, or Travels in the West,'† "is received through the medium of a mental vision, distorted by prejudice and *fancied* contempt." The passage which I next quote occurs in Mr. John McLean's

* "Western World," vol. iii., pp. 319, 322.
† Vol. i., p. 233.

"Notes of a Twenty-five Years' Service in the Hudson's Bay Territory:* "The mercenary pens of prejudiced narrow-minded individuals contribute daily to add fuel to the flame. Our 'Diaries' and our 'Notes,' replete with offensive remarks, are, from the cheapness of publication, disseminated through the length and breadth of the Union, and are in everybody's hands; and those foolish remarks are supposed to be the sentiments of the British nation, when they are, in fact, only the sentiments of individuals whose opinions are little valued at home, and ought to be less valued abroad." Several years ago Professor Wilson wrote from Edinburgh to N. P. Willis: "What a strange thing it is that nobody can write a good book on America! The ridiculous part of it seems to me that men of common sense go there as travellers, and fill their books with scenes such as they may see every day within five minutes' walk of their own doors, and call them American."† Lastly, let us hear the testimony borne by Lady Emmeline Stuart Wortley, in her volumes of "Travels in the United States:"‡ "Great injustice," she observes, "has been done to the Americans, and we have been accustomed too implicitly to believe the often unfair and unfounded reports of prejudiced travellers. Amongst the less educated, no doubt, occasionally, some of the faults so unsparingly attributed to them may be found; but they appear to me, as far as I have had any opportunity of judging as yet, a thoroughly hospitable, kind-hearted and generous-minded people." Such evidence as I have just adduced becoming every year more conclusive and emphatic, must sooner or later convince the inhabitants of this country how completely they were deceived by the splenetic and untruthful writers whose effusions gained so much credence at an earlier date in the present century. But, notwithstanding the strenuous efforts made by authors of no principle to keep alive the feeling of animosity

* Vol. ii., p. 176.
† Willis's "Pencillings by the Way," vol. iii., p. 214.
‡ Vol. i., p. 26.

which arose out of the revolutionary war, the Americans are proud of their English descent, and look upon this island in their secret heart with the same respect that a good man cherishes towards an attentive mother, or a successful aspirant after distinction towards the teacher who first counselled him to be industrious, energetic, and economical of time. They may now and then indulge in hard speeches or brood over past injustice, but the old attachment has survived years of warfare and estrangement; once and again the traveller unexpectedly sees a manifestation of its force, and were Great Britain threatened in earnest with an attack by the armies of despotism, her own "revolted colonies," as obstinate old George the Third used to call them, would, I believe, be the first to aid us in defending our hearths and our homes! During a visit which I paid to Mr. Prescott, the historian, at his city residence in Boston, I observed over the window at one end of his library two swords crossed. One of these was borne by Colonel Prescott, at the battle of Bunker Hill, and the other by Captain Lizeen, the maternal grandfather of Mr. Prescott, and commander of the British sloop of war, Falcon, which fired on the continental troops on that occasion; and on my return home, I read with pleasure the following remarks on this union by an American writer:* "It is a significant and suggestive sight, from which a thoughtful mind may draw out a long web of reflection. These swords, once waving in hostile hands, but now amicably lying side by side, symbolize not merely the union of families once opposed in deadly struggle, but, as we hope and trust, the mood of peace which is destined to guide the two great nations, which, like parted streams, trace back their source to the same parent fountain." Such I think are the sentiments entertained by the great body of the people in the United States, by the native-born Anglo-Saxons who really constitute the nation. Some people have formed their impressions of American character and opinions from Milesian-Irish mobs in the

* "Homes of American Authors," p. 129.

larger cities, from the anti-English speeches of unprincipled Washington politicians, from the proceedings of ignorant emigrants from Germany and Tipperary who have settled in the West, from the Frenchified population of New Orleans, and from the desperadoes of all countries, who travel in the steamboats on the Mississippi, or lounge about the bar-rooms of hotels; but the Great Republic can no more be said to be fairly represented by men of this class, than England would be by the physical-force Chartist, the half-clad Celt from Connaught, or the Pariah of Hindostan. Our common law is the basis of American jurisprudence; political liberty is enjoyed as well by mother as by daughter, and our transatlantic friends feel themselves bound to us not only by the ties of kindred, but because they look upon us as the guardians of freedom in the old world as they are in the new. It is remarkable too to observe in what kindly, I might almost say chivalrous language, the staunch republicans of America—I don't refer to political vapourers and demagogues, whose orations pass in this country for far more than they are worth—speak of our Queen. "Were she to visit us," writes one of them,* "she would be welcomed, I am sure, as never was lady before. What processions we should have! Up the Bowery, down Broadway; from Roxbury line to Faneuil Hall, up Court and Tremont to a tent on the Common: it would be grand! She will probably come in her own yacht—and when she does, nobody certainly can say we have a British *Tory* among us." I have quoted already from Lord Jeffrey; and as my object is not to obtrude upon the public my own opinions, but to lay before it information on a most important subject, I offer no excuse for giving one more extract from the writings of that great man: "There is no one feeling," he remarks,† "having public concerns for its object, with which I have been so long and so deeply impressed, as that of the vast importance of our maintaining friendly and even cordial

* "Homes of American Authors," p. 117.
† "Life," by Lord Cockburn, vol. i., p. 247.

relations with the free, powerful, moral, and industrious states of America—a condition upon which I cannot help thinking that not only our own freedom and prosperity, but that of the better part of the world will ultimately be found to be more and more dependent." These observations, it appears to me, must at once recommend themselves to every true philanthropist. And may we not reasonably expect that the cultivation of this sentiment by liberal men will be attended before many years with practical results? Events both here and at the antipodes have recently been tending in one direction, to the accomplishment of an end fraught with unspeakable blessings to humanity. It requires no superhuman sagacity to foresee, looming through the mists of uncertainty which now hang over nations, the fraternal meeting of the two branches of the Anglo-Saxon race—the alliance, offensive and defensive, between England and the United States of America. Both have overrun continents not with armies, but with husbandmen and merchants; both have opened up empires to Christianity and commerce; both have discovered El Dorados on the Pacific coast, and we want but to know in order to appreciate each other—to find out that we have not only a common origin and a common love of liberty, but a common interest and a common destiny, as joint instruments in the hands of Providence of carrying an energetic race and a noble language, the blessings of civilization, and a benign religion through difficulties and dangers to the uttermost ends of the earth.

Since the preceding remarks were written, a noisy and unprincipled section of American politicians has contrived to produce a very general impression in Europe that public opinion throughout the Great Republic sympathises not with the allies, but with the Russian autocrat in the present sanguinary contest. It is not surprising that those who are ignorant of the state of parties, and the working of an unlimited democracy on the other side of the Atlantic, should be thus deceived, for the Irish mobs in the large cities, who cheered

Meagher, and proclaimed John Mitchell the noblest of patriots,—the reckless filibusters of the south, who hate Great Britain as the avenger of injustice, and the asylum of the slave,—the Red Republican adventurers from the Continent, eager for employment against a nation which is the bulwark of constitutional monarchy, —and a few thoughtless military officers thirsting for promotion and fame—raise so great a clamour and force their own declarations into so undue prominence, that one can scarcely realize the fact that they no more represent the sentiments of the American people, than do the physical force Chartists those of the inhabitants of England. I have in a former chapter referred to the political corruption prevalent in the United States. Is it unlikely that men like THE TRADERS IN LEGISLATION, who swarm in the lobbies of the Capitol, and may be found as well in the several State senates and at the municipal boards, should accept largesses from the Czar, should in fact hire their services for a consideration to the great enemy of European civilization and rational liberty? Both "the voice and echo of rumour" lay this crime to their charge, and if such strange reports prove in any respect true, it will become the urgent and sacred duty of the American people to avenge the injured dignity of their country by putting an end to practices and intrigues which are beginning to attract towards Washington the indignant eyes of the civilized world.

Why should the true-hearted and generous citizens of the United States, the native-born Anglo-Saxons, who really constitute the nation, suffer their opinions to be misrepresented, their institutions brought into disrepute, and their influence at foreign courts weakened by a set of men of so little consideration at home, and so thoroughly selfish in all their doings? These plotters and trafficking statesmen must be reduced to their own proper insignificance before the Americans will meet with much sympathy when they complain of misconception and ignorance on this side of the ocean. If they permit those of their newspapers, which every child

throughout the Union knows to be full of unblushing falsehoods, to enjoy almost a monopoly of circulation in Europe, and suffer the statements of New York mobs and South-western filibusters to cross the Atlantic uncontradicted from week to week, they must expect both misconstruction and unmerited detraction. If we are credulous, they are supine; if we in our simplicity believe the accounts given by demagogues and hired advocates, they should take care to send us more reliable information. I cannot, however, regard but as most blameworthy, any amongst ourselves who without due investigation, and on the faith of a few mere newspaper extracts, have attempted to excite angry feelings in Great Britain against the Americans for their alleged sympathy with Russia in the present war. True, the good sense of the community frowns upon such endeavours, but a certain number of inconsiderate persons are always ready to adopt ideas of this kind on most insufficient grounds, and I envy not the responsibility of those who lead their neighbours on the ice before reflecting well on its strength and safety. In the present instance, men who strive to produce alienation of feeling between the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon family, by adopting as true the contemptible asseverations of unprincipled journals, and as unprincipled politicians, retard the spread of freedom both in the old world and the new, and play into the hands of those very despots on whom the vials of their wrath are so constantly poured.

That our diplomatic engagements with Austria and the alleged pledge of France to keep down the Italian patriots, the reluctance of the allies to reconstruct Poland as an independent nation, and their hostility to the American desire for territorial aggrandisement; our hesitancy to admit the principle that free ships make free goods, and a lingering soreness arising out of the struggle for independence, have all tended to lessen the interest of our transatlantic friends in the contest

now waging, I think by no means improbable, but at the same time I most cordially concur in the declaration of the 'New York Journal of Commerce,' "that four-fifths of the inhabitants of the United States share the hatred of the western nations of Europe against Russian despotism; that every arrival from Europe which brings news of defeat to the arms of the Czar is regarded by them as good news, and every cloud over the prospects of the Allies as deplorable intelligence, which they hope may be remedied or dispelled."*

The writer of the admirable article, of which the preceding sentence forms the conclusion, complains grievously of the "profound want of knowledge" of America and Americans displayed by persons in England, "whose duty it is to be well informed on such subjects," and very truly adds that the hostile, mischievous, and untrue assertions ever and anon being made about his country by British journalists, tend to produce the very feelings which they so much deprecate, and of which the Great Republic, as a nation, is unjustly accused. Whilst adducing the testimony of the RESPECTABLE portion of the press in the United States, I cannot refrain from quoting one paragraph from an article on Christmas Day, in the 'Boston Daily Atlas' of 25th December, 1854, an article eloquently written, and illustrating, far better than any words of mine, the real sentiments of the American people at this important crisis in the affairs of Europe.

"Nor let us forget, in the midst of our small sorrows and petty cares, that land in which for so many years Christmas has been so wisely and so merrily kept. Into many a castle and cottage of old England this sacred day will bring no accustomed old time gladness, for the manly forms of son, of father, or of brother, which moved to delightful measures under the misletoe only a twelvemonth ago, are sleeping the sleep that knows no waking beneath the snows of the Crimea and in the

* "New York Journal of Commerce," December 30, 1854.

blasted trenches of Sebastopol. The gallant fellows are at rest now, peasant and peer slumbering in one common grave: and he who left behind him only a poor cot, a poor widow, and six poor little children, is wept for as bitterly as the boy-officer from whose veins, at Balaklava and Inkermann, flowed the blood of the Howards, the Percys, and the Plantagenets. Yet whether the dead soldier is wept for in the lowly hovel or the lofty ancestral castle, whether the bosom that mourns him heaves beneath serge or satin, be sure that the memory of his stern unflinching bravery brings the best consolation to every true British matron."

Before leaving this subject, there is one consideration which we, and much more our friends in America, should keep in mind, viz., that according to many whose testimony is both unprejudiced and founded on personal observation, the remarkable success of the American Protestant missionaries in the East has contributed more than any other cause to hasten the accomplishment of Russian designs on Turkey. The Emperor trembles for the supremacy of the Greek Church on the shores of the Levant and the Euxine; for years his agents have been plotting to put a stop to the work of conversion now going on — often have they tried to arm against the innovators the fanatical portion of both Mussulmans and Christians, and as often have they been signally foiled by British officials, especially by that noble-minded advocate of the oppressed, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe. It is now reported that the Muscovite minister at Teheran, and the Muscovite consul at Tabriz, have procured from the Persian government decrees which will virtually crush the American mission to the Nestorians at Oroomiah. I shall not be sorry if this prove true, for it may open the eyes of many on the other side of the ocean who misunderstand the nature of this war, and show more manifestly that it is the duty of every constitutional nation to withstand, if necessary by force of arms, the projects of a despot who seeks to ride roughshod over the liberties of Eastern Europe and Western

Asia. It would be singular, indeed, if the United States stood aloof from or looked coldly on a struggle originated by her own zealous and self-sacrificing citizens, who, with so much ability and perseverance, have prepared the way for the restoration of freedom and evangelical Christianity in regions which formed the cradle of the human race.

CHAPTER VII.

American newspapers—Their number, cheapness, and inferiority in point of literary talent—Booksellers' shops—Thirst for reading and knowledge—Literature of the Union—Its theologians and popular writers; Washington Irving, Cooper, Prescott, Hawthorne, Emerson, Channing, Bancroft, Longfellow, and Audubon—Literary ladies of America; Mrs. Sigourney, Miss Sedgwick, Grace Greenwood, Fanny Fern, and Harriet Beecher Stowe.

I HAVE submitted the thoughts which occurred to me at different times in regard to the political condition and prospects of the transatlantic republic; a very few observations on its newspapers and literature may be fitly embodied in the present chapter.

Some of my readers may recollect the very eloquent passage in Sir Walter Scott's "Life of Napoleon,"* where the unfortunate consequences of that conqueror preventing public opinion manifesting itself through the press are so forcibly pointed out. "The downfall of this species of freedom," remarks our historian,† "as it is the first symptom of the decay of national liberty, has been in all ages followed by its total destruction." Measuring America by this standard, it must be free indeed, for its citizens support no fewer than 2800 newspapers, having a circulation of about five millions, and an annual issue of more than four hundred millions of copies. On the continent of Europe a few journals struggle against a rigid political censorship; in a country

* Chap. lxvii. † "Life of Napoleon," chap. lxxxiii.

not yet one hundred years old, two thousand weekly, and three hundred and fifty daily periodicals, inform every farmer and artisan between the Atlantic and the Rocky Mountains, what is going on both at home and abroad. Almost every town of considerable size has several daily papers; each village has one, if not two, according to the strength of the political parties in its vicinity; and in places that have started into existence within a few months, secluded amid the forests of the Far West, you find very tolerable weekly sheets. In Great Britain, the public journals circulate chiefly in reading rooms, hotels, railroad stations, and the houses of the wealthier inhabitants of towns; in America every family among the rural, as well as the urban population, takes in a local, if not a metropolitan newspaper. This national habit causes a demand quite unexampled in Europe, and enables men of every class to exercise their minds on political questions, and to inform themselves on the topics of the day. It is no uncommon thing to meet farmers of small means and limited education who can talk as learnedly about Italian or Spanish politics as attachés to legations.

But the very number, and consequent cheapness of newspapers in the United States, prevent in general great talent from being employed upon them. No proprietor can afford to pay high salaries, either to editor or contributors, and consequently when mere news are scarce, stupid love stories and silly anecdotes may often be found occupying the place of original matter of an instructing nature. Then the advertisements usually fill up three-fourths of the space. As they have never paid duty, the people have got into the practice of making every saleable article thus publicly known. When any one gets a few hams or a box of dry goods, half a dozen cheeses, or a score of barrels of flour, he immediately advertises them. A great proportion of American journals might be termed more appropriately "news sheets," as they contain scarcely anything of an editorial character, and are glanced at, not read. They

will get out any quantity of "extras," and even go to considerable expense to procure early intelligence by telegraph or otherwise, but literary talent they cannot remunerate, for in a country where books are so cheap, few think of devoting more than ten minutes to a daily newspaper. Their reports of speeches and proceedings, whether at public meetings or in legislative assemblies, will not for a moment compare with those given in England. It is usual on the morning after a debate, to give a mere outline of it, and several days afterwards to print some particular oration *in extenso*, often revised and corrected by the person who delivered it. The provincial journals seldom transfer to their columns any epitome of the discussions in Congress; but substitute letters from their correspondents at Washington, with a mere sketch of what goes on, and party comments upon it. Yet a few of them contain a fair proportion of useful matter, accounts of new discoveries, notices of books, dissertations on agricultural improvements, legislative suggestions, and well-chosen extracts from eminent authors. In New York and some of the larger cities, there are now daily papers, which show much laudable enterprise, which contain original matter from every quarter of the globe; and which, though immeasurably inferior to the London press, approximate more than their contemporaries in the provinces, to the rank and influence of such periodicals in England.

But whilst in a literary point of view, American newspapers contrast very unfavourably with ours, they by no means answer to the descriptions which have been given of them by some British writers, as "immoral" in their tendency, and calculated to corrupt the public taste. It surprises me that a man like Mr. Dickens, who had opportunities of judging, should have given such an unjust and ill-tempered account of them, as has through the medium of his "Notes" been circulated over the length and breadth of this land. Sir Charles Lyell tells me a very different story.* "I have purchased

* "A Second Visit to the United States," vol. ii., p. 41.

newspapers at random," says he, "wherever we went in the northern, middle, southern, and western states, and came to the conclusion that the press of the United States is quite as respectable as our own." I have travelled over more ground in the Union than either of them, and read, perhaps, as many papers in all parts of it. I agree with Sir Charles, whose work will be found well worth reading, and not a mere burlesque. He is a far more reliable authority than the author of "Martin Chuzzlewit." As to the numerous silly anecdotes which we every now and then see copied into our periodicals as from American papers, most of them are written in London. In the western journals I have met with extravagant stories of this kind, but not more frequently than in papers published by cautious, matter of fact Scotchmen.

It has been frequently remarked by observant travellers, that the number and character of the booksellers' shops in a country afford a better indication of the state of education than the most minute attention paid to its seminaries of learning. If we apply this test to the United States, we must form a very high notion of the intelligence of the people, for the smallest towns in rural districts have all stores for the sale of books and music, as large and as well supplied as many in our chief cities. I was surprised to find mere villages so favourably circumstanced in this respect. It only illustrates still further the remarkable demand for information, and its general diffusion amongst all classes throughout the Republic.

The Americans have England to thank for a very large proportion of the supply which goes to quench this honourable thirst for knowledge. No sooner does a history, or novel, or book of travels, by an eminent writer appear in London, than agents in this country forward copies across the Atlantic, there to be reprinted and circulated in thousands, from Maine to the mouths of the Mississippi. The stranger may find in lonely farm-houses amongst the forests of Ohio, on the wide

prairies of Illinois, in negro-cabins by the way-side in Kentucky, even in log-huts far up the Missouri, little libraries, containing the best works of Scott and Byron, Wordsworth and Southey, Chalmers and Hall, Marryatt and Bulwer Lytton. Few men born under the star-spangled banner are ignorant of British literature, and some, whose uncouth aspect tells of labours at the out-skirts of civilization, have an acquaintance with letters which might put to the blush many European gentlemen. This energetic and intelligent people, however, during the short century of their national existence, have been so occupied in developing the agricultural, commercial, and manufacturing resources of their country; their strides, in a material point of view, have been so gigantic, that they have left themselves little time for intellectual efforts, further than those required to influence political elections. America has hitherto given birth to few notable authors, excepting her theologians, who, for no inconsiderable period, have occupied a prominent place in the literary arena. Moses Stuart, Albert Barnes, Edward Robinson, and Joseph Addison Alexander, among the living, Jonathan Edwards and Edward Payson among the dead, are names familiar as household words to all acquainted with this department of study. Admitting that her divines stand in the foremost ranks of Christianity's champions, the enemies of the Republic frequently reproach her with having produced neither a historian nor a novelist, nor a poet of world-wide reputation. But times, in this respect, are changing, too, and let us Britons see to it, lest the young empire, whose railroads and telegraphs, whose steam-ships and factories, have risen from the primeval forests like the creations of a magician's wand, outstrip us also in the intellectual race, and, with a vigour now scarce in ancient lands, transfer to paper the workings of that mental power which has always distinguished the trans-atlantic portion of the Anglo-Saxon family. Already the printing-presses of London have begun to copy those of New York; the pirates are now on this side of

the ocean as well as on the other; every bookstall at English railway stations groans under the products of American mind; Longfellow has written odes which lead us to hope that America may yet produce a Campbell: Washington Irving's tales delight thousands who are not critics enough to observe the happy manner in which he seeks to interest the people of the New World in the history and associations of the Old, to soften national animosity, and to mould the style of his fellow-countrymen after the best masters of England's Augustan age; Fenimore Cooper has found a place in all our libraries, and, in the opinions of some well qualified to judge, even the stately periods of Gibbon, and the classic eloquence of Macaulay, can scarcely compare with that charming style in which the deeds of Cortes and Pizarro have been enshrined by William Henry Prescott. Many of our countrymen, too, must have read "The Blithedale Romance," "The Scarlet Letter," or "The House with the Seven Gables." I recommend those who have not, to make an early acquaintance with the strange originality, the powerful modes of expression, the pure English, and the highly-wrought images of Nathaniel Hawthorne, a novelist rapidly rising to a high position in the temple of fame. The flow of his diction reminds me of Pope's stately measures; his style has Carlyle's depth and quaintness without his affectation of singularity. He surrounds every-day life with a magic halo, and sees Eastern visions on New England soil. I would speak cautiously of Emerson, because I am quite unequal to the task of pointing out either the merits or demerits of a writer whose great abilities and greater errors have puzzled far wiser heads than mine; who so often mixes crude analogies, wild paradox, and unintelligible insinuations, with conceptions which startle you by their intellectual power.

Many years ago the essays of William Ellery Channing were read with admiration by Englishmen; as specimens of elegant composition they stand very high, and entitle their author to be called the Addison of

America. If Channing be the Addison, Bancroft is the Hume. His volumes bear evidence of diligent research, ease in composition, and historical accuracy. Let us not forget John James Audubon, the bold hunter and learned ornithologist, whose hut has so often been erected on the slopes of the Rocky Mountains, and on the wide savannahs by the banks of the Missouri and the Yellowstone. Should *we* pass him by, unmindful of the great obligation under which natural history lies to him, our descendants must ever cherish his name, for there is not a bird whose habits and plumage his works do not immortalize, from the tiny speck which hums in the gardens of Florida, to the eagle which makes the cliffs of the Sierra re-echo its scream.

I might enlarge the foregoing list and speak of Bryant and Everett, of Dana, Cheever and Peter Parley; but, without saying more about America's literary men, I shall add a few words about her literary ladies. And well may we remember their claims, for if the gentlemen of the United States, the graduates of Yale and Harvard, do not look to their laurels, Europe will begin to sympathize with Lucy Stone, and to imagine that the greater proportion of talent in their country must be awarded to women. How sweetly pathetic are Mrs. Sigourney's poems; how touching and lifelike the stories which Miss Sedgwick has written in her New England home! Mrs. Farnham has enlisted our sympathies with the settlers on the prairies; Grace Greenwood has afforded many a family circle pleasant hours; and who, amongst the thousand readers on the other side of the Atlantic, has not heard of Fanny Fern, whose sketches of character and moral maxims, applicable to the daily routine of life, and presented in a form so attractive as to disarm opposition, with all their brilliant wit and tender remonstrance, their simplicity, truthfulness, and force of expression, their playful humour and merry irony, may be found on every bookseller's counter, and on most parlour tables throughout the Union. Writing, not from Boston or the Empire City, but from a little

country-town in the western part of the State of New York, anonymously, and a mere series of fragments, her exquisite pathos has gained for her the tribute of national applause. It is long since I have felt so deeply as I did on turning over these "Fern Leaves, gathered at random in shady spots, where sunbeams seldom play." Need I say one word about Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe? This is no place to discuss the moral of the tale; but who amongst us can rival the irresistible humour, the tenderness, the heart-stirring appeals, the idiomatic vigour, the freshness of thought, and power of execution which characterise every page of "Uncle Tom's Cabin?" No wonder that such a book has reached a circulation, exceeding, I believe, that either of "Robinson Crusoe," or the "Pilgrim's Progress;" unequalled, in fact, in the history of literature. How remarkable that, ere the work had been a twelvemonth out of the press, more readers had shed a tear over the grave of the negro in the wilds of Arkansas, than had sympathised with the heir of Ellangowan, or lamented the hapless fate of Romeo and Juliet!

CHAPTER VIII.

Social state of America—Its homes—Boarding-house system—High life in New York—American viands and mode of cooking them—Fast eating—Stoves and anthracite coal—The ladies of the great Republic—Their social position, habits, and education—Love of dress and inattention to health—Their beauty and intelligence—New Year's Day on the other side of the Atlantic—National sports and amusements—Benevolent institutions—Administration of justice.

In order to become accurately acquainted with the social condition of a country so peculiarly situated as the United States of America, the traveller must visit its "Homes," must breathe their sacred atmosphere, must carefully observe their influence, and must consider well their relation to the industrial, political, and moral resources of the commonwealth. The secret of that material progress which has fixed on the young Republic

the wondering eyes of Christendom, is not to be discovered by looking into shop windows, whirling along in railroad cars, or lounging in the gorgeous apartments of modern hotels. There are shops, and railways, and gigantic inns in bureaucratic Austria, in down-trodden Italy, in corrupt and fallen Spain; but in these lands you search vainly for the domestic hearth, the family enjoyment, the thousand delightful associations connected with what Professor Wilson has so aptly styled, "the Sabbath sanctity of home." Not that individual instances may not even there be found of circles that appreciate the

> "Only bliss
> Of Paradise, that has survived the fall;"

but that abroad, the majority of the people waste in frivolous amusements those precious hours which the Anglo-Saxon parent, on both sides of the Atlantic, devotes to the education of his children and the cultivation of his mind. The Lusthaus of the American is his snug little parlour; with his cheap books and entertaining magazines, he finds his time pass away more pleasantly than the German who cannot exist without his tea-gardens, or the Frenchman whose thoughts centre in the play. No doubt there are diversities between various portions of the Union in regard to social manners; Boston does not differ more from Hamburg than it does from New Orleans; the descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers have customs varying widely from those of the mixed races on the Gulf of Mexico, or even from the planters of the Old Dominion; but take the country as a whole, leaving exceptional cases out of view, and I feel persuaded you will agree with me in thinking that the well-spring of the Republic's rising greatness, the source of all her power, lies, not in political institutions, not in territorial arrangements, not in the peculiarities of race, or the advantages of situation, but in the attachment of her people to the family circle, in their anxiety

> "To taste and to communicate the joys,
> The thousand fond endearing charities

> Of tenderness domestic; nature's best
> And loveliest gift, with which she well atones
> The niggard boon of fortune."*

Whether we enter the manor-houses of the South, where the ease and elegance of society testify to a class removed by birth and position from the toils of labour, or the stately mansions of merchants in the maritime cities, replete with every luxury which money can provide, or the neat farmers' dwellings in New England, redolent with all that makes a fireside happy and a nation great, or the rude huts buried in western forests, the abodes of men who conceal beneath a rough exterior, minds guided by stern principle, and hearts of sterling worth; amidst all the differences incidental to position, we shall be at no loss to discover that the guardian angel of America is the genius of home. "We read," says a recent transatlantic writer,† "that 'God setteth the solitary in families.'" The significance of this beautiful expression dwells in its last word. The solitary are not set in hotels, or boarding-houses, nor yet in communities or phalansteries, but in families. The burden of solitude is to be lightened by household affections, and not by mere aggregation. True society—that which the heart craves, and the character needs—is only to be found at home, and what are called the cares of housekeeping, from which so many selfishly and indolently shrink, when lightened by mutual forbearance and unpretending self-sacrifice, become occasions of endearment and instruments of moral and spiritual growth." The foregoing extract, while it expresses the profound conviction of the American people, at the same time implies a censure on the practice which so extensively prevails, especially in the larger cities, of families, chiefly young married couples, living in public hotels or crowded boarding-houses, instead of taking houses of their own. The reasons alleged for this custom, are the difficulty of procuring good servants in a country where the

* Hannah More's "Sacred Dramas"—*David and Goliath.*

† "Homes of American Authors"—article, *Prescott*, p. 124.

labouring classes can employ their time much more profitably, the vexation and annoyance almost invariably given by the Irish girls who act in this capacity, the enormous rent demanded for apartments and the high price of provisions. The indisposition of young ladies to undertake the responsibilities and troubles of attending to domestic arrangements, as long as they can live where they have plenty of servants and a sumptuous table, and as long as their husbands are good-natured enough to indulge their whim, may be added as a fifth and exceedingly potential cause of this uncomfortable, unnatural, and undesirable mode of living. I one day visited no fewer than twenty-five of these boarding-houses in New York, in search of rooms suitable for the accommodation of my family during my absence in Cuba and the Southern States. Many of the handsomest mansions in the upper part of the city, I found to be establishments of this nature, and I was not a little amused by the interviews I had with pompous dames who received me in elegantly furnished drawing-rooms, before showing me the dear and shabby apartments upstairs. This system does not obtain to such an extent in Philadelphia, where, it appears to me, there is far more real comfort than in the commercial capital. People there do not live in their basements, and keep their good rooms for show. The Quaker city can boast of a more refined, though not of a more ostentatious, aristocracy than its neighbour, New York. The fashionables of the latter do not understand how to make social intercourse really enjoyable. They know little or nothing of select dinner parties and small evening companies, such as we entertain in Great Britain, but either expect their friends to drop in after tea of their own accord, or invite them to gatherings of two to five hundred people, crowded together in hot rooms, for the purpose of dancing the polka. These parties are given only about once a year, and cost in many cases extravagant sums of money. I heard of one to which seven hundred and fifty persons were asked, at an outlay of fourteen

thousand dollars. The ladies who consider themselves leaders of the fashion, boast of the number attending their balls, and, in order to swell that number, actually applied to a certain Mr. B——, sexton of a fashionable Episcopalian Church, not one hundred miles from Union Square, who keeps a list of "desirable and likely" young men, delivers invitations, and himself acts as master of ceremonies. "Fast" gentlemen give him a fee of twenty to twenty-five dollars for the privilege of having their names entered on his list, and thus being introduced to the *haut ton* of the Fifth Avenue. This I believe to be an institution quite peculiar to the other side of the Atlantic. To us, unsophisticated lovers of decorum in the old country, it savours somewhat of vanity and vulgar pomp.

The Americans, almost to a man, act on the maxim,

> "Early to bed, and early to rise,
> Is the way to be healthy, wealthy, and wise."

This habit goes far towards prolonging life and neutralizing the effects of a dietary system which is most prejudicial to health. On the latter subject, Miss Bremer remarks* with great justice, "I am becoming more and more convinced that the diet here is unwholesome, and is not suited to the climate, which is hot and stimulating. They eat hot bread for breakfast, as well as many fat and heating dishes, besides roast pork, sausages, omelets, and such like. In the evenings, especially at all suppers, they eat oysters stewed, or a salad and peach preserve, a peach ice, &c." The rapidity with which Americans devour their meals has become proverbial. I well recollect my astonishment at the first dinner which I witnessed on board a Western steamboat. No sooner had the captain taken his place than my neighbours at table seized every dish within their reach, mixed roast veal, sausages, butter, puddings, tarts, sweet potatoes, bread, and cabbages on the same plate, and swallowed them heterogeneously, as fast as

* "Homes of the New World," vol. i., p. 152.

their hands could raise the viands to their gaping mouths. Six or seven minutes after the bell rung, a dozen fellows started up in breathless haste to pick their teeth and prepare their mouths for tobacco. But in this respect the Down Easters beat the Western men hollow. I shall never forget the inconceivable rapidity with which I saw meals discussed in the State of Maine. I found, however, a great change for the better in this respect during my last visit, although at the Virginia Hotel in St. Louis (Missouri), out of 250 who sat down to dinner, only 20 remained longer than ten minutes. It is needless to say how injurious this practice is to the health of the population. The mode of heating houses by means of stoves which burn anthracite coals, also affects most prejudicially the sanitary state of the families who use them. Hawthorne, in his "Mosses from an old Manse," refers to this when he writes, "Our successors will have grown up amid furnace heat, in houses which might be fancied to have their foundation over the infernal pit, whence sulphurous streams and unbreathable exhalations ascend through the apertures of the floor." The wooden logs in the country give out a cheerful blaze, but in the towns the English fire-place has but a poor substitute in the "sullen stove."

Fenimore Cooper, in one of his novels,* remarks:—"The good treatment of their women is the surest evidence that a people can give of their civilization;" and he adds, "and there is no nation which has more to boast of in this respect than the Americans." I had marked several passages from recent European writers for quotation, to verify this statement, and to prove, in the words of Mrs. Houston,† that "a young and pretty girl may travel alone with perfect safety from Maine to Missouri, and will meet with nothing but respect and attention the whole way;" but the fact is so patent and indisputable, that it would be a waste of time to bring

* "The Spy," chap. xxx.
† "Hesperos," vol. ii., p. 185.

forward elaborate testimony. The attention paid to the feebler sex in the United States in drawing-rooms, steamboats, railroad-cars, and public assemblies, is well-known to every one who has studied the subject; indeed, it is often carried too far, degenerating into a sort of homage, which the ladies, were they to consult their own dignity and self-respect, should not encourage. Fanny Fern, impressed with this spirit of exaction on the part of her countrywomen, thus rates them in her own happy style of irony:—"When you enter a crowded lecture-room, and a gentleman rises politely,—as American gentlemen always do,—and offers to give up his seat, which he came an hour ago to secure for himself, take it as a matter of course, and don't trouble yourself to thank him, even with a nod of your head. As to feeling uneasy about accepting it, that is ridiculous! because, if he don't fancy standing during the service, he is at liberty to go home; it is a free country! When you enter the cars, and all eligible places are occupied, select one to your mind, then walk up to the gentleman who is gazing at the fine scenery through the open window, and ask him for it with a queenly air, as if he would lose caste instanter did he hesitate to comply. Should any persons seat themselves near you not exactly of 'your stamp,' gather up the folds of your dress cautiously, as if you were afraid of contagion, and apply a 'vinaigrette' to your patrician nose!" I have spent many agreeable hours with American ladies, and retain pleasant recollections of their liveliness and intelligence, but must candidly say that in the opinion not only of all well-bred foreigners, but of many citizens also, the gentlemen treat them far too much like spoiled children; and if in this respect they boast of their civilization, it is the civilization of Don Quixote rather than of Christianity and common-sense. "When I write my threatened book upon female education," observes Lord Jeffrey* to an American

* "Life," by Lord Cockburn, vol. ii., p. 149.

friend, "I must rank that of your free country among the most injudicious." However they may differ in other particulars, European travellers have expressed themselves with wonderful unanimity on this subject. Indeed, the evil is so self-evident, that the most prejudiced cannot fail to notice it. Young ladies who in all other civilized countries would be considered mere boarding-school misses, in whom modesty is regarded as the most essential acquirement, in the United States, casting off all restraint, not only act an independent part and display an ease of manner savouring painfully of pertness and pretension, but actually assume the lead in society. Prematurely embarked on the sea of life, they acquire at an early age a self-confidence and a freedom of demeanour by no means feminine or calculated to please an impartial spectator. Forward without genius, and talkative without information, they often render conversation frivolous, and overbear wiser heads by their loud assumption of unnatural dignity. It is repugnant to proper feeling to see married women, though distinguished for beauty and accomplishments, comparatively neglected in company, while girls of sixteen or seventeen, who have nothing to recommend them but thoughtlessness and volubility, are surrounded with listeners. Nor is this abuse confined to the drawing-room and the evening party; it enters into the daily routine of domestic duties. Instead of assisting her mother, the lovely Miss M—— laughs at and snubs her, asks whom she pleases to visit at the house, and does nothing all day long but flirt, lounge, and read novels. It appears to me that the system of education at many of the ladies' academies encourages this prevalent folly; the proficiency of young misses in algebra, moral philosophy and physics, being published far and wide, and exhibited before admiring audiences, whilst the humbler but far more important engagements of domestic life seem to be entirely forgotten by both pupils and teachers. Above the portal of every such seminary, on the mind of every American matron,

should be written in striking characters the words of Milton:

> "For nothing lovelier can be found
> In woman than to study household good."

If the damsels of the Great Republic would bestow more time in looking after the arrangements of the kitchen, the laundry, and parlour, and less on mathematics, Spanish, and light literature, the tone of society would be elevated, and the homes of the Western Continent would become still more influential for good. My fair transatlantic friends may think these criticisms severe; but candour compels me to charge them further with the excessive love of dress, and with being so extravagant in this respect, that it is the most fertile subject of complaint on the part of husbands and fathers. Nothing is more common than for a lady to incur enormous bills to drapers all over town for silks, satins, and India shawls, without the knowledge of the unfortunate individual who must pay them; and when she goes to Newport or Saratoga for a month in summer, she orders a new dress for every morning, and another for every evening of her sojourn. The extent to which this silly vanity is carried would scarcely be credited, even in the gayest circles of Europe. Nor can I overlook the injury they do to their own health and the health of the nation, by not taking exercise. Not only in the towns, but in country quarters, they often sit from sunrise to sunset in rocking-chairs; the idea of walking appears shocking to them, and as to roaming in the woods or climbing hills, they would regard any one who proposed such a thing as a madman. Round a suffocating stove during winter, and diligently fanning themselves all summer, they lead a sort of butterfly life, which may yet tell most unfavourably on the succeeding generations.

"After all, it is not good,"* exclaims honest Miss

* "Homes of the New World," vol. ii., p. 8. See also "America as I found it," p. 194.

Bremer; "no, it is not good, it has not the freshness of Nature, that life which so many ladies lead in this country; that life of twilight in comfortable rooms, rocking themselves by the fireside from one year's end to another; that life of effeminate warmth and inactivity by which means they exclude themselves from the fresh air, from fresh, invigorating life. And the physical weakness of the ladies of this country must in great measure be ascribed to their effeminate education. It is a sort of harem life, although with this difference, that they, unlike the Oriental women, are here in the Western country regarded as sultanesses, and the men as their subjects."

Having said so much against American ladies, it is but fair that I should say something in their favour. Few people after they have been a week or two in the United States, fail to notice how very seldom they meet a plain-looking woman, excepting in districts frequented by the Celtic Irish. In Italy and the Grecian Archipelago, in Andalusia and in England, I have seen much more beautiful faces and forms than in any part of the Western world; but in none of these countries have the majority of the female sex such claims to correct features and pleasing expressions. You may walk for an hour in Broadway, crowded as it is with people, and not see a single repulsive countenance. "I have seen more pretty faces," remarks an English writer,* "in New York in one hour than in all my life in Britain." My own journal for November, 1853, has a similar entry,—viz., "I am every day more and more struck with the good looks of the American ladies. One seldom meets a female with unprepossessing features." I find in my note-book for April, 1846, the following testimony:—"I have seen more beauties here (New York) in one day than I saw during a residence of two winters in Edinburgh. They are delicate-looking beauties, however, and I dare say soon lose their charms in a climate

* McLean's "Residence in the Hudson's Bay Territory," vol. ii., p. 180.

so changeable and trying." But, as Shakespeare says in one of his little-known sonnets,—

> "Beauty is but a vain and doubtful good;
> A shining gloss, that fadeth suddenly;
> A flower that dies, when first it 'gins to bud;
> A brittle glass, that's broken presently."

I must, therefore, do the American ladies the justice to say, that they have other claims on our admiration. Strangers are frequently surprised at their mental accomplishments and originality of thought. Generally well read, and animated in their conversation, they strike one as remarkably intelligent, and their lively good humour draws away attention from deficiencies arising from an injudicious system of tuition. Mrs. Stowe observes,* that "conscientiousness with New England women is the granite formation which lies deepest, and rises out, even to the tops of the mountains." I would endorse the sentiment, and extend its application, more or less emphatically, to the ladies of the Republic in general.

New Year's Day is kept as a strict holyday throughout the United States, all the stores and shops being shut, and business totally suspended. On this day the ladies hold levees, expecting a call from every gentleman of their acquaintance, and vying with each other in the splendour of their drawing-room decorations, and the sumptuousness of their refreshment tables. Some receive 500 to 700 visits before evening. On this day, too, following a pleasing old Indian custom, reconciliations are effected; a call on a person with whom you have not been on good terms being regarded as a full explanation, and bygones then become bygones at once.

The Americans, as a people, are not fond of amusement. Their theatres are few in number, and those few are supported chiefly by foreigners; you seldom hear field-sports referred to even by young men, and athletic games have very little place in the affections of the nation. To roll balls in a ten-pin alley by gaslight,

* "Uncle Tom's Cabin," chap. xv.

or to drive a fast trotting-horse in a light wagon along a very bad and very dusty road, seems the Alpha and Omega of sport in the United States. I except the trotting-matches, or "trots," which take place on courses near the principal towns, because, of late years, few gentlemen of reputation, however fond of horses and excitement, would be seen amongst the crowd of dissolute characters who now own most of the celebrated horses, and frequently, at the last moment, refuse to let the race go on, that the tavern-keepers, in league with them on the ground, may get two days' custom instead of one. Many "trots" are got up by low publicans merely to sell drink. I never, in my life, saw such a collection of ill-looking blackguards as on the course near Philadelphia, and at Oakland, in the neighbourhood of Louisville, Kentucky. Some of the horses, however, are really worthy of attention, from their remarkable shape and still more remarkable action. I saw one four-year old at Ticonderoga, for which 390*l*. had just been paid. The Americans, it appears to me, devote far too little time to innocent amusement, and that recreation which is so conducive to health. Day after day they harass their bodies and minds in the counting-house or the store-room, making business a slavery, and money-making an unnecessary toil. It may be an old world prejudice on my part, but I cannot help thinking that to the love of her people for field-sports and athletic exercises in the open air, England owes much of her national greatness. Her fox-hunters have stood victorious generals on battle-fields famous on the page of history; young men who learned to row a boat at Eton have swept the seas in command of Britannia's bulwarks, and spirits inured to hardship on Scotland's mountains, first imbibing their love of adventure in pursuit of the grouse and the red deer, have carried the civilization of this little island to the banks of the Murray and the slopes of the Himalayas. Pleasure, we all know, must be kept in its proper place, but that will be a sad day for England when the moor and the loch, the cover and the

regatta, the cricket-ground and the golf-field are deserted by men who, like our transatlantic brethren, are very helots to merchandize and politics.

It will be unnecessary for me to do more than mention that the various reformatory and charitable institutions throughout the United States are just such as one would expect in a great free country, where the people have sufficient intelligence for self-government, and where Christianity exercises a powerful influence. There exists, in all parts of the country, admirably-conducted infirmaries and asylums for the insane, hospitals for the blind, and deaf, and dumb, and in many of the States schools for the reclamation and instruction of youthful criminals. Every separate commonwealth has its penitentiary, into which all the modern improvements in prison discipline have been introduced. I visited the famous one near Philadelphia, so minutely described by Mr. Dickens. It then contained 340 inmates, who were comfortably lodged, well fed, and supplied with valuable books, besides receiving regular visits from a moral instruction-agent, and listening every Sunday to a sermon. The officials assured me that the charge brought against the institution of impairing the mental powers of the criminals was utterly destitute of foundation.

It is painful to observe that, in many instances, mob-violence even yet interferes with justice in the Western Republic, and that wealth and station procure acquittals far more readily there than they do in aristocratic England. So many American citizens admitted and mourned over these evils to me, that I shall not occupy my space in adducing proof. All who read the newspapers will be able to recal sad examples of law being overborne, and the sacred principles of right trampled upon among our neighbours during the last few years. Such cases as that of the Wards, in Kentucky, who murdered a schoolmaster in open day, and were yet found not guilty by a jury of their countrymen, do more towards bringing American institutions into disrepute

abroad than whole volumes of argument, and all the nonsense annually talked in houses of representatives. Europeans will never believe that a country is really free as long as rowdyism reigns rampant in civilized cities, and social rank, partisanship or pecuniary bribes corrupt the fountain-head of justice. It is mockery for citizens of those States, where punishment seldom or ever overtakes the rich, to talk of liberty and equality. Under the shadow of ultra-democratic governments in the other hemisphere, every year judicial decisions are given without exciting attention, so unrighteous and so strongly marked by a mean subserviency to wealth and station, that, were they pronounced in monarchical Britain, no matter how high the authority, the consequences would endanger the peace of the nation, and shake the very pillars of the throne.

CHAPTER IX.

Peculiarities of Brother Jonathan—Costume—Nasal tones—Phrases—Names—National boasting—Tobacco chewing—Profane swearing—Manners of the Americans.

It is but reasonable that I should venture on a very few remarks in regard to those peculiarities of brother Jonathan which have been so unsparingly ridiculed and caricatured on this side of the ocean, but I shall do so in a very different spirit from that which pervades the fanciful and highly-coloured narratives of Mr. Dickens and Mrs. Trollope. First, then, the Americans think it necessary to dress in fabrics of the most expensive materials. You meet men in railroad-cars, and on the decks of steamboats, rigged out in superfine broadcloth and white waistcoats, as if they were on their way to a ball-room, and common workmen you find attired in glossy black clothes while performing work of the dirtiest description. Fustian and tweeds are seldom seen; and, whilst travelling in shepherd-tartan, I have been stared

at as much as an ourang-outang in a menagerie. The farmers are the only class who wear rough garments, and even their costume, in some districts, is sufficiently ludicrous. The people have yet to learn that apparel should be chosen for use not show, that shabby broadcloth is the most pitiful of all costume, and that it is no mark of gentility to wear a dress unsuitable to one's means and employment.

Then can any one tell me why a nation of sensible individuals must needs speak through their noses? The learned differ as to the origin of this strange habit; but whether it has been acquired from intercourse with the Indians, by imitating the phraseology of the negroes, or from other causes, the nasal tone is now all but universal, although much softened and modified in the more refined circles of the Atlantic cities. There are, however, very few dialects or corruptions of the vernacular language in the United States. The inhabitants have, no doubt, coined and changed the signification of single words; but you can always understand what they mean, and you never doubt that they are speaking English, which cannot be said of the good folks in many parts of this little island. Few persons are ignorant that the word "fix," with our American friends, means anything and everything. I once travelled in a stage-coach over the Alleghany Mountains with six western men, whose conversation and anecdotes amused me exceedingly; especially the significations in which they used this unfortunate or rather accommodating word. I happened to pull out of my pocket a ticket for the steamer on the Monongahela, when a smart man opposite me from East Tennessee immediately called out, "Look here, I ain't got none of them fixins." His neighbour, shortly afterwards, stroking his chin, soliloquized, "Wall, I guess I'd better get fixed (i. e. shaved) at Wheeling;" the "fixins" or eatables at supper were pronounced heavy, and a jolly fellow, who sat next me relating his experiences in travelling with a certain General Cunningham, who weighed 220 pounds, and a Colonel Talbot,

who was still heavier, remarked, with reference to a stage-coach, "I never in all my life seed such a fixin; in the very first hole the driver 'fixed' (or overturned) her, with them two weighty boys on the top of me; warnt I scared and perteeklar riled, and didn't I 'fix' the proprietors in the Nashville newspapers."

The Americans display very little ingenuity or good taste in their choice of names for towns, rivers, steam-vessels, &c. In many instances they have changed the euphonious appellations of the Indians by no means for the better. For example, the red-men called Westport, in Connecticut, Saugatuck; New York was formerly Manhattan, and Mount Washington, in New Hampshire, was "Agiocochook," the Throne of the Great Spirit. On the Mississippi you find steamboats called the 'Telegraph,' 'Telegraph No. 2,' 'Telegraph No. 3,' 'Telegraph No. 4,' the 'Pike,' the 'Lady Pike,' the 'General Pike,' and the 'U. S. Mail,' while the number named after individuals, 'John T.'s,' 'Samuel A.'s,' 'Jacob R.'s,' and 'Benjamin S.'s,' is legion. Then every second village you pass is either "Franklin," "Monroe," "Jefferson," or "Lafayetteville," unless, indeed, it be "Havana," "Springfield," "Bloomington," or "Montgomery."

I was exceedingly struck with the remarkable stature of the men who inhabit the Mississippian valley; they are perfect sons of Anak; in Kentucky you meet few under six feet two or three inches, and while standing at the bar of an hotel in Louisville, I was startled by the apparition of a giant measuring seven feet nine inches in his stockings.

The offensive manner in which Americans, especially the less refined, brag of their country and its institutions, has been much animadverted on by Europeans. They do this far more abroad than at home, feeling justly that one who has seen the United States does not require to have their praises sounded in his ears, whereas foreigners who have never crossed the ocean are apt to forget and ignore the claims of the Republic to its rank amongst

the nations. Then, to use the words of Lady Emmeline Stuart Wortley,* "they feel their destiny; and we should remember what a prospect lies before them." This is all very true, and may serve as an explanation and an apology; but in a few years, when better accustomed to greatness, they will find out that boasting is both undignified and unwise. Men may be born to "whip universal natur'" without telling the fact to every one they meet. I was talking one evening in the dining-room of a large hotel with a very pleasant southerner, about the progress of liberal opinions and the prospects of the Anglo-Saxon race, and happened to say, "It appears to me that Providence has designed the two nations to civilize the globe." A little sharp-featured man opposite immediately started up and addressed me. "Two nations; guess there's only one, stranger; goin' to annex that island of yours one of them fine days;—don't know how little Vic. will like that, but got to do it, no mistake about that." On another occasion, I met in a railroad car a true specimen of a Down Easter, a regular live Yankee from Maine, who "wanted to know" what I thought of "Ameriky," and perseveringly plied me with questions likely to elicit a statement of my impressions. At the close of the cross-examination, after a long pause, and staring me full in the face, he summed up as follows:—"Wall, now, I declare I knowd it; we air a great people, and bound to be tolerable troublesome to them kings."

But the most disagreeable—not to say disgusting—habit with which our transatlantic friends are chargeable, is that of chewing tobacco and spitting. Even in the northern and eastern states it offends the European traveller, while in the south and west it is carried to an excess which defies exaggeration, and renders locomotion sometimes a positive nuisance. Excepting when at a party or in a lady's drawing-room, thousands of men all over the Union keep their jaws in perpetual motion from sunrise to sunset. A stranger voyaging in a Mississip-

* "Travels in the United States," vol. i., p. 241.

pian steamboat might well arrive at the conclusion that expectoration was a necessity of existence with the natives of that region. The deck, paddle-boxes, railings, cabins, stoves, and chairs of the vessels are often so besmeared with brown juice, that you cannot distinguish their colour. I made a trip on the Ohio with a young man whom I never saw but once, even at meals, without a quid rolled in his cheek, and who squirted with remarkable regularity, according to my watch, seven times per minute, or 5040 times in the twelve hours. Another person who sat beside me in a Presbyterian church at Cincinnati, kept up an incessant fire of liquid tobacco during the service, and on one of my first journeys on American railroads, between New York and Philadelphia, having been incautious enough to lay my writing-desk on the floor of the car, I found it, on rising to leave, in the midst of a pool of, and quite saturated with, the juice of the weed. Nor can I ever forget a scene in the hall of the Virginia Hotel at St. Louis, one wet evening in the autumn of 1853, when the floor was a sea of rain-water and liquid tobacco, while the spitting rendered it impossible for an uninitiated stranger to walk about or read the newspapers. In the street, at the bar-rooms, or on the decks of steamers, however, one can generally, by a little dexterity, avoid being spat upon, unless, indeed, he receive an unexpected volley at a corner; but in a railroad car there is no way of escape. One man spits on the floor between your legs, another out at the window, within an inch of your nose, a third over your shoulder on the side of the carriage, a fourth makes a target of the door by which you wish to make your exit; you let fall your glove on the floor, it floats in tobacco-juice, and your wife's gown is ruined by contact with the filthy boards of the carriage. I quite agree with Dr. Johnson,* who said, "This spitting is as gross a thing as can well be done: and one wonders how any man or set of men can persist in so offensive a practice for a whole day together; one should expect that the

* "Life," by Boswell, chap. lxxvii.

first effort towards civilization would remove it even among savages."

Candour compels me to say that profane swearing is a vice widely prevalent in the United States, especially among the Southern planters and the pioneers of the Western country. The former habitually use oaths of the most appalling kind, coining words, and stretching to the utmost their inventive powers, in order more emphatically to blaspheme. You hear constantly in the public conveyances and hotels of America expressions with which few English gentlemen would pollute their lips, and now current on this side of the Atlantic only amongst thieves and vagabonds. Even reputable men in the Republic have yet to learn that apart altogether from its sinfulness, the habit is both contemptible and meaningless. Bob Acres may hold that there is such a thing as "an oath referential or sentimental swearing;" but most people in civilized countries have come to the conclusion that the practice betokens mental incapacity.

> "Jack was embarrassed, never hero more,
> And as he knew not what to say, he swore."

It is a common prejudice in Britain that the Americans are a rude people, by no means polite to strangers, and disagreeable in their manners. I found them quite the contrary, having in all my wanderings only experienced two instances of discourtesy; and I am glad to observe that recent English writers, without exception, give a like testimony. Lord Carlisle says,* "It is something to have travelled nearly over the whole extent of the Union without having encountered a single specimen of intentional incivility." Lady Stuart Wortley † writes: "Instead of disobliging in their manners, we find them all that is most civil and obliging." Captain Mackinnon, in his "Atlantic and Transatlantic Sketches,"‡ bears witness as follows: "It is hardly possible for an English-

* "Lecture to the Mechanics' Institution and Literary Society of Leeds."

† "Travels in the United States," vol. i., p. 26.

‡ Vol. i., p. 25.

man (who has only read of the States) to arrive in any one of them without some little apprehension of the supposed 'republican rudeness' of the citizens. The moment however he lands, this apprehension leaves him. He feels at once, almost by intuition, that he is amongst as civil people as any in existence." In Sullivan's "Rambles and Scrambles in North and South America,"* there occurs this passage: "I had a strong prejudice against the American people, acquired by meeting very bad specimens on the Continent; but I have convinced myself it was unfounded, and I do not hesitate to say that I met as agreeable women and gentlemanly men in America as the world can produce. I met with nothing but civility and hospitality during my stay." Mr. Mackay, Sir Charles Lyell, Professor Johnston, indeed every author whose verdict is of the least consequence, gives similar testimony; and I should not have thought it necessary to allude to the subject, had not the misstatements of caricaturists been circulated in England more extensively than the evidence of writers who value their reputation more than a mere temporary popularity, and would scorn to obtain readers at the expense of truth.

CHAPTER X.

Manufacturing and commercial enterprise of the United States—Mechanical skill—Changes observed by me in seven years—Statistics of progress—Trade and shipping—Factories—Visits to Lawrence and Lowell—The operative class.

I WOULD now call my reader's attention briefly to the wonderful enterprise of the American people as manifested in the extent of their manufactures and commerce. There are few Captain Dolittles in the Great Republic, who rejoice in a "happy vacuity of all employment;"† and those few are rather looked down upon in a country

* Preface. † "Introduction to the Monastery."

whose inhabitants regard idleness as dishonourable, and are all engaged in some species of trade. It would be unwise on our part not to watch the gigantic industrial strides making by our neighbours, and the triumphs of art and ingenuity even beyond the Alleghanies. Their inventive capacity and the skill with which they render the discoveries of science subservient to the wants of every-day life, the magnitude of the works undertaken by individuals and companies, and the unwearied activity displayed in every branch of material development, force themselves upon the notice of every civilized country, especially of that which has hitherto been the workshop of the world. "America," says Mr. Mackay,* "is yet destined to rear up a fabric of commercial greatness, such as the world has hitherto been a stranger to. On such a theme it would be idle to speculate minutely; but this much at least may be safely predicted of a people with ingenuity equal to, and with resources ten times as great as ours, and with an enterprise which drives them with ardour into every channel of trade, from ransacking the South Sea for whales, to trafficking round the world with ice." This energy manifests itself in small affairs as well as large, in the step of the pedler as well as in the countenance of the East India merchant. One day I was attracted by a crowd in Broadway, New York, accompanying a wagon drawn by six white horses, with other carriages behind containing a band of music. I ran as fast as my legs could carry me to ascertain the cause of this triumphal procession, and the name of the conquering hero, and found to my extreme surprise that the gaily decorated vehicle was only an advertising medium for "Howe's Cough Candy." It might truly be said of Brother Jonathan what Tully said of Marcus Brutus: *Quidquid vult, valde vult.* No one can fail to be struck with the extraordinary enterprise which so honourably distinguishes the United States,—her noble merchant ships, superb river steamers, manufactories,

* "Western World," vol. i., p. 120.

railroads, mines and telegraphs, those sure evidences of a nation's incipient power. Internal navigation is facilitated by canals and slackwaters, news are transmitted with the rapidity of lightning from one end of the Union to the other, the cooking apparatus in the large hotels is driven by steam power, and biscuits for exports are made by millions with the aid of the same agent. Indeed there is no one feature in American commerce more interesting than the readiness with which machinery is introduced into all branches of industry. They have machines for making shirts, all but the gussets; machines for stone dressing, enabling one man to do the work of twenty; machines for spinning, which require only one man to a mule containing 1088 spindles, each spindle spinning three hanks per day; machines for door-making, by means of which twenty men make 100 panelled doors per day; machines for sewing, at which one woman can do as much as twenty with the hand; machines for net-making, saving ninety-nine per cent. of labour; machines for the manufacture of ploughs, which turn out thirty in twelve hours. The people of the United States are far too well educated and intelligent to form combinations to resist the introduction of machinery, knowing well that, especially in a country where labour is scarce, the national prosperity depends very much on the readiness with which steam-power is called in to aid in manufactures. Thousands of schoolboys in the New England and Central States cherish a hope of one day rising to eminence by some mechanical invention. On all hands you see evidences of the remarkable ingenuity of the population. In the large cities it is quite common to elevate lofty houses and ware-rooms by means of jack-screws, and insert a new ground story on a handsomer scale. This process saves roofing, and leaves the other flats precisely as before. I have frequently seen wooden dwellings in course of transport on rollers from one site to another, and even churches may occasionally be met coming down the street on a pilgrimage to a more

eligible locality. I was astonished at the changes which had taken place in the appearance of many of the cities in seven years. Whole districts of New York were entirely new. The vast increase of traffic in Broadway, the greater splendour of the shops, the number of immense brick stores which had been built where old Dutch edifices and boarding-houses formerly stood, the splendid restaurants, printshops, plate glass windows and enormous hotels, struck me as soon as I landed. Then in the neighbourhood, villas, rows of houses and villages are starting up like mushrooms, on spots which five years ago were part of the dense and tangled forest; and the value of property everywhere, but especially along the various lines of railroad, has increased in a ratio almost incredible. Small fortunes have been made by owners of real estate at Yonkers, and other places on the Hudson river. In Brooklyn the transformation was still more remarkable; the rows of brick houses, plain and faced with marble and brown sandstone, in process of erection, being apparently endless. I was informed that 1500 to 2000 dwellings are there annually built, and invariably let as soon as ready. Even staid old Boston had been extended and beautified greatly since my last visit; and though possessed of a retentive memory for localities, I should not have recognised Cleveland in the handsome and bustling city, which from its lofty bluff overlooks the waters of Lake Erie. The traveller in America can scarcely fail to observe the number of actively employed saw-mills, some of them buried in the recesses of the primeval woods, or on the banks of wild rivers far distant from the abodes of the white man. Wherever a rapid is found, wherever the hunter in his wanderings has reported a cataract, thither the enterprising Yankee transports his machinery, and there, in the course of a twelvemonth, he establishes a flourishing trade. Saw-mills have rendered Glens Falls on the Hudson near Lake George one of the busiest and most increasing towns in the State of New York; Ticonderoga drives a similar business on a scale quite

surprising for so secluded a place; and far away in the interior of Michigan I saw steam-engines hard at work cutting and planing wood. The governor of Ohio has published the following statement, showing the marvellous prosperity of that State:

Years.	Value of real estate.	Value of personal property.
1841 . .	$100,851,837 . .	$27,501,820
1847 . .	324,396,008 . .	79,151,765
1854 . .	565,000,000 . .	285,000,000

The number of Post Offices throughout the Union has increased from 75 in 1790, to 20,901 in 1852—their revenue from 37,935 to 6,925,971 dollars, and the miles of mail routes from 1,875 to 214,284. The value of the imports has risen in ten years from 100 millions to 216 millions of dollars; that of the customs from 18 millions to 45 millions; the amount of the cotton crop from 800 to 1000 millions of lbs.; that of the rice crop from 80 to 225 millions of lbs.; that of the sugar crop from 155 to 281 millions of lbs.; that of the wheat crop from 77 to 100 millions of bushels; and that of the maize crop from 400 to 600 millions of bushels: while the value of the exports of domestic produce approaches 200 millions of dollars, and of both cottons and woollens the States now manufacture three times more than they receive from abroad. During the year ending 30th June, 1852, the tonnage of American vessels entered from 78 foreign countries was 3,235,522, and that of the American vessels which cleared to these countries 3,230,590; the total tonnage of vessels belonging to the Union was 4,138,441, and the tonnage of vessels built during one year ending at that date was 351,493. I have in my possession a very interesting table, showing the number, size, and class of all the vessels launched and on the stocks at New York last year, and the total number of ocean steam-ships with their names and burden, constructed by the shipwrights of that city. The aggregate number of the former is 145, and their tonnage 105,228; while since 1840, 66 ocean steam-ships, whose tonnage is 106,000, have left the yards; six of these were of

3000 tons each, and fourteen of more than 2000: the whole sum invested in their construction being 13,200,000 dollars. I spent a whole day strolling through the ship-builders' yards, and along the wharves on the East River, and was amazed with the number and variety of the crafts in the various stages of advancement. At one bend of the Delaware, between Philadelphia and the sea, I counted no fewer than forty sail; and nothing strikes a stranger more than the clean and trim appearance of American shipping. The most remarkable vessel I ever saw was the mammoth ship, "Great Republic," which was unfortunately burnt at her quay when taking in her first cargo. She hailed from Boston, cost 300,000 dollars, and registered 4558 tons. Three large packets lying beside her looked like boats when contrasted with her; her spars might have served as masts for ordinary vessels. She had a steam-engine on board for hoisting them, and her cabins were like apartments in a hotel. The Americans carry off the palm in the construction and navigation of these splendid liners; they nearly monopolize the carrying trade between their country and Great Britain. They have long ago appropriated to themselves the South Sea Whale Fishery; their clippers have a well-earned reputation in the China Seas, and their enterprising supercargoes may be found in every corner of the globe. Englishmen have at last began to rouse themselves from their lethargy, but not until they discovered American ships and American captains preferred all over the world to their own—the former being faster, and the latter better educated and paid than those of a nation which trusted rather to former supremacy than to progressive improvement, to navigation laws rather than to superior skill.

The capital now invested in manufactures throughout the Union is immense; New York and the New England States taking the lead, but followed by Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Ohio, Virginia, and even Georgia and the Carolinas. It may be estimated at about 550 millions of dollars, of which nearly a fifth has been expended for

the spinning and weaving of cotton. The woollen trade occupies the next most prominent position. Then there are silk works, and leather works, and oil mills, and flour mills, besides nearly 40,000 mills for sawing timber, and paper factories on an extensive scale. Cincinnati has large workshops for iron and brass; clouds of smoke from innumerable foundries darken the air of Pittsburg, the Sheffield of the United States. On the 1st of June, 1850, the value of the articles thus produced was 1,020,300,000 dollars, a result which throws into the shade the industrial exploits of any other nation in the same period of time.

The chief seat of manufactories near New York is Paterson, a town of 15,000 inhabitants, romantically situated at the foot of the Great Falls on the Passaic in New Jersey. There are there several cotton and silk mills, the Dolphin works for making carpeting and sail-cloth, the Ivanhoe paper works which cost £60,000, and four locomotive shops which turn out 200 engines per annum. One of these, belonging to Messrs. Rogers, Ketchum, and Grosvenor, gives occupation to no fewer than 800 men. The water race from the cataract of the Passaic forms three distinct descents in driving these various factories. The great bulk of the workmen are Irish, while most of the managers are Scotchmen. They have a short-time bill in New Jersey, but no penalty is attached to its breach, a fair sample of State legislation in many parts of America, where needy orators take up a political cry merely to get office without caring one straw for the good of the people. In November, last year, I paid a visit to the new manufacturing city of Lawrence, situated twenty-six miles from Boston, on the Merrimack, across which a joint stock company erected a granite dam 1629 feet in length, at a cost of 250,000 dollars. The great works, viz., the Pacific Mills, the Atlantic Mills, the Bay State Mills, the Pemberton Mills, the Duck Company's mill, and the machine shop, stand on the left bank of the stream, close to its margin; the wide mill race runs between them and a long row of

boarding houses, and beyond—on sloping ground, only purchased in 1845 for the purpose, and at that time a solitude — is the town with its public park, municipal hall, and fourteen churches. The people assess themselves 10,000 dollars per annum to support the common schools, which are attended by 1600 out of the 1880 legally eligible scholars. A newspaper was published in this remarkable place, when the editor could only obtain sixty-nine subscribers, and before a single brick house had been erected. The works all belong to joint-stock companies in Boston. Greatly to my surprise I found an esteemed friend of my own, who was a fellow-passenger of mine across the Atlantic in 1846, designer and treasurer of the huge Pacific Mill, which when completed will cost £300,000, and employ 2500 people. It has seven stories, each forming one room 800 feet long, and has sixteen and a half acres of flooring, while Titus Salt's new work at Saltaire, in Yorkshire, has only twelve.

The famous manufacturing town of Lowell is situated on the right bank of the same beautiful river Merrimack, just below the rapid called Pawtucket Falls. It is in the State of Massachusetts, but close to the frontier of New Hampshire, from which a great proportion of the operatives come. In former times, before Europeans had driven the red men from the Atlantic slope, the ground on which New England's Manchester now stands was occupied by Wamesit, the wigwam metropolis of the Pawtucket domain. At the junction of the Concord with the Merrimack, the Indian warriors often met to consult on their waning fortunes and to devise new schemes for delivering their native wilds. Towards the end of the seventeenth century, however, the increasing power of the whites compelled them to forsake the graves of their fathers and migrate towards the setting sun. Eighty years afterwards a company was formed for the purpose of constructing a canal round Pawtucket Falls in order to facilitate the conveyance of timber; and in 1813 a wooden mill, for the manufacture of cotton

goods, was erected on the Concord river. Powder mills and saw mills soon followed; and in 1822 there was organized the Merrimack Manufacturing Company — the commencement of a new era in New England's history. From that time to the present uninterrupted prosperity has been the lot of Lowell, so named after one of the founders of its staple trade. In 1828, the Appleton and Lowell companies were incorporated; these were followed in 1831, by the Suffolk, Tremont, Lawrence, and Middlesex, and in 1835, by the Boott. Besides these there were in 1846, when I visited the place, three other associations—the Hamilton, Massachusetts, and Prescott. I had previously heard much of Lowell,—of the health, comfort, and happiness of its manufacturing population, —of their superiority in point of education, morality, and religious principle, to similar communities in the Old World, and I certainly was not disappointed. No rags, no abject poverty, no drunkenness, no coarse language, or unseemly behaviour. The mills during the day, and the crowded streets in the evening, were filled by an orderly, and apparently intelligent people. Towards sunset I walked for two or three hours about the streets, and was struck with the decorum which prevailed. The shops were full—the pavements crowded,—thousands of factory girls were sauntering along, enjoying the cooling breeze; but at a little distance from that populous town, one might have closed his eyes and fancied himself a wanderer by the banks of the Merrimack, in the days when the forests were only disturbed by the war-whoop which warned the hunter of the red man's track. The city of Lowell contained in 1846, 30,000 inhabitants, one-third of whom were operatives, employed at the various works. Of these, 7000 were females, and 1000 males. There were thirty-three mills, besides the print works, with an invested capital of 12,000,000 dollars. They were then making annually 75,868,000 yards of cloth, 1,500,000 dollars being expended in wages. They are not the property of individuals, but of joint-stock companies, each company

being managed by a gentleman resident at the works. The partners for the most part live in Boston. The machinery is all driven by water power, and the buildings are of brick, substantial and well finished. In Lowell there is a very small population permanently engaged in manufactures. The girls seldom remain at the works longer than five years, but at the end of that period return to their rural homes, with a little purse, and send their younger sisters to supply their places. To encourage this system, the different corporations require their workers to board in one of the houses which are attached to each mill. There are 550 of these boarding-houses, in all of which every attention is paid to the health and comfort of the inmates. Those who behave improperly are summarily dismissed; but out of 6800 girls, mentioned in a late statistical report, only forty-nine had been turned off for this reason. Total abstinence from intoxicating liquors is regarded as a pre-requisite towards obtaining employment; and the moral police system among the operatives themselves, is said to be perfect. The rooms are lofty, well ventilated and warmed, and the statistics of health encouraging. A comparison was made between the bills of mortality of Lowell, Salem, Providence, and Worcester, none of the three last manufacturing towns, and it was found that the first had an advantage of fifteen per cent. I was informed, however, last year, that owing chiefly to the great influx of Irish and Germans, of a low grade, the Lowell operatives have recently rather degenerated in point of character. The average wage of the females is about 8s. 6d. per week, besides board; although many earn nearly double that sum. The excellent common school system of education adopted in all the New England States, sufficiently accounts for the general intelligence of the operatives. The numerous "Improvement Circles," or literary societies, at which so many of the workers spend their leisure time—the clever articles in the "Lowell Offering," written by the girls themselves, the well-frequented libraries and crowded lecture

rooms bear ample testimony to the existence of "Mind among the Spindles." Three-eighths of the girls in 1846, were church members, and three-sevenths either teachers or pupils at the Sabbath schools. How long this happy state of things may continue, it is not for me to predict; many believe in its permanence—others think the experiment will eventually fail, but in any case it cannot but attract the attention of all who are interested in the well-being of their fellow men.

CHAPTER XI.

The temperance question in America—History and working of the Maine Liquor Law—Political manœuvres in connexion with it—Remarks on its English advocates—A word to emigrants.

FEW people can be ignorant that for many years America has been the scene of a continued and zealous agitation of the temperance question; originating in the manifest necessity of stemming that torrent, which at one time threatened to devastate the land, and undermine its whole political fabric. The drinking usages of the last generation on the other side of the Atlantic were, if possible, more degrading than those which prevail among ourselves; and not only Christians, but patriots and statesmen, felt themselves obligated to devise measures for removing such a stain on the escutcheon of their country. Lectures, oral and written, pulpit exhortations, mass meetings, total abstinence societies, and such other appliances as come under the designation of moral suasion, were the only means employed until lately for the accomplishment of this end. And it must be allowed that they were attended with no small degree of success. The change for the better was observable in all classes. The immoderate use of spirits came to be regarded as a disgraceful vice; the retail liquor trade suffered; the religious bodies exerted their influence

with vigour and firmness; the commitals for crime rapidly diminished; and cities once noted for bacchanalian occurrences, became quiet and orderly. Sir Charles Lyell* bears testimony to the wonderful improvement in this respect; and during my travels through the United States in 1846, I saw but three drunken men. The general intelligence of the people, and the universal diffusion of education, of course, conduced most materially to aid the efforts made by philanthropists, to bring about this result by the force of argument and public opinion, without having recourse to legislative enactment, or any *modus operandi* having the appearance of restraint. For some time past, however, it has been evident that the disease had only been checked, not cured, and with the vast increase of ignorant emigrants, persons to a large extent incapable of understanding appeals which had carried conviction to the great body of the American people, appeared a corresponding increase of drunkenness and its attendant ills. I last year saw many intoxicated persons in New York, Chicago, St. Louis, and other populous places frequented by the class just referred to; and even on the streets of Puritan Boston, I was jostled by tipsy men. A malady of this kind, we know, soon spreads, and all over the Union complaints began to be made of its revival and injurious effects. At the close of 1853, the city of New York alone had 6902 licensed taverns, affording a revenue of 69,020 dollars to the corporation; and gin shops had sprung up like mushrooms in every State, even in little villages where the temperance reformation had formerly triumphed, and in the woods of the west, where one would scarcely have supposed that there were inhabitants enough to support them. Disappointed with this new aspect of affairs, and forgetting the success of their former measures, the teetotallers bethought themselves of stronger remedies than lectures and pledges. It has always been the opinion of public men

* "Second Visit to the United States," vol. i., p. 158.

in the United States, that the trade in intoxicating liquors, however lawful in itself, being liable to dangerous abuse, like that in gunpowder, medicine, or poison, ought to be narrowly watched by the legislatures; and none for a moment doubted the right of the governing powers to interfere with and restrict it, when necessary. When, therefore, a law was passed in one of the States, prohibiting the sale of liquor entirely, it was found, after a severe examination and much discussion, the question having even been referred to the supreme legal tribunal at Washington, to be quite within the powers of that State, whatever arguments of a different kind might be urged against it; and seeing that the right of interference was admitted, it became manifest that the people could carry it to any extreme they pleased, provided they did not violate the Act of Congress, which permits the importation of foreign liquors, and consequently renders it *ultra vires* any particular State to prohibit them being sold *in the original package*.

The principal features of the Maine Law are succinctly the following.

1st. The prohibition of the manufacture and sale of spirituous liquors.

2nd. The right to seize and confiscate liquor held for illegal sale.

3rd. The right to search for liquors in private houses upon the affidavit of three persons, that they believe liquors are held there for illegal sale.

4th. The appointment of town agents for the sale of liquors for medicinal and artistic purposes.

To these provisions, the good folks of Rhode Island have recently added another, by which any person found indecently drunk may be confined in the common jail until he discloses the name of the person who gave or sold him the liquor. Laws nearly identical to this have been passed in Vermont, Massachusetts, Michigan, and Minnesota; the British province of New Brunswick has followed their example, making an exception, however, in favour of malt liquors and cider; a very small majority

only, defeated a like measure in Canada;* Illinois and Ohio forbid liquor to be sold for consumption on the premises; and Iowa has rendered illegal the sale of it by the glass or dram.

Such is a brief sketch of the history of this movement. Leaving out of view the more moderate measures, such, for instance, as those taken by Ohio, viz. putting down dram-shops entirely, and making intoxication criminal, what has been the effect of the unmodified and stringent Maine law? Has the entire prohibition of the traffic in fermented drinks, either by wholesale or retail, by legislative enactment, eradicated intemperance? I answer without hesitation, No! Can it be enforced? In many of the villages and smaller country towns, it can, and has been, at least to a very considerable extent; in most of the cities not at all. I have seen with my own eyes, drunken men on the streets, and dozens of wine consumed in the hotels of large towns subject to the provisions of the Maine law; and I really cannot help expressing my surprise that Englishmen, of ordinary intelligence and observation, should travel through America, and then come here and tell us that liquor of any kind could not be obtained for love or money in the States which have passed this bill. Such unaccountable misstatements do more harm to the temperance cause than the most subtle arguments of its opponents. Its sincere friends should discourage exaggeration, and carefully examine the credentials, both of those who give them information and of those whom they employ to diffuse it. But, one may reasonably ask, if the desire of the community, as expressed by its representatives, in legislature assembled, in some instances even by direct vote, is, that this traffic should be prohibited and stopped, why cannot it be carried into effect, just as are the laws against forgery, theft, or murder? Were the premise of this proposition true, there would be no little difficulty in answering the question; but I join issue with the supporters of this enact-

* This was written several months since. The newspapers report the passage of the measure by a subsequent vote.

ment, by denying their assumption that the majority of the people concur in approving of the law. The history of this kind of legislation shows me that the Maine liquor law has been carried in various States, not because its advocates had anything like a numerical preponderance, but because the two great political parties —the Whigs and Democrats—were so evenly balanced, that sometimes one, and sometimes the other, agreed to do as the Temperance men wished, to secure their votes. The latter had only to stand shoulder to shoulder, to resolve to poll for no candidate unless he pledged himself to support the Maine law, in order to compel one of the factions, from sheer necessity, and solely for political purposes, to adopt their views. The consequence, in some cases, has been the passage of that stringent enactment, with not the slightest intention, not to say power, of enforcing it,—men voting for it, and then ironically hurraing for it in their cups; good people at a distance meanwhile being deceived, and fancying a great social improvement, whereas there was in reality nothing more than a paltry legislative trick.

In so far as the operation of the Maine Liquor Law has been to remove temptation from the ignorant and debased, it has unquestionably done good;* and I met

* This has been especially the case among the lumbermen in the forest districts, and the scarcely less refined inhabitants of the seaport towns in Maine; but it by no means follows that such an enactment was the best possible remedy for the evils which drunkenness caused in that State, as well as other regions of America peopled by wild and lawless men. It may have, I have no doubt that it has, produced a marked improvement, diminishing pauperism, outrage, and crime; but there is surely a medium between the unlimited licence which prevailed before 1851, and the extreme rigour of the measure lately adopted, a measure which, if properly enforced, amounts to much more than its English advocates call it,—"A law for the suppression of tippling-houses and dramshops." Some kind friend sent me a bundle of "Ipswich Temperance Tracts" to convince me of my errors on this subject. Whilst the facts and arguments stated in them confirm my belief that a course of prudent and wise legislation might materially improve the habits of this nation, so far as intemperance is concerned, they do not in the least alter my conviction that the Maine Law by its severity, not to say injustice, could never be carried into effect in Great Britain, or if hastily

several persons who advocated and voted for it because it would shut up a number of low tippling shops, while their own claret and Madeira would not be interfered with. This result, however, could be obtained by far less extreme enactments, and those parties would no doubt have preferred the law of Illinois or Ohio. But no such choice was given them, and rather than permit the present state of things in their neighbourhood to continue, they gave in their adhesion to a measure which they thought unnecessarily severe.

If in some respects and in some districts this kind of legislation has been attended with beneficial consequences, in others, truth compels me to say, it has done absolute mischief. In the first place, to pass laws as the result of a political manœuvre and not with any expectation of enforcing them, is to bring discredit upon representative government and to sap the very foundations of public tranquillity. Every measure ought to express the national opinion, and on questions of this kind it is unreasonable to suppose that an extreme, like the Maine Liquor Law, should command a majority without years of agitation and argument. Further, the adoption of this measure in certain cases actually increased the consumption of ardent spirits. When I was in Massachusetts last year, the distillers held a meeting and resolved to raise the prices, owing to the

adopted, would create a revulsion of popular sentiment unfavourable to temperance. The first and third questions of tract 206 in the above series will show at a glance the crude and contradictory nature of this truly American specimen of law-making. "Question 1.—What is the Maine Law? Answer.—It is a law prohibiting the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors to be used as a beverage. Question 3.—Does the Maine Law prohibit the use of intoxicating beverages by individuals or families? Answer.—Its entire prohibitions relate to the sale, and not to the use." What quibbling is here! If no one is allowed to make or sell liquor, how can families supply themselves? Englishmen like an honest answer to a plain question, and always suspect trickery when contradiction and evasion are manifest at a glance. The Maine Law goes much further than restraining or abolishing dram-shops; and whatever good in default of wiser measures it may have effected in America, it would never be seriously debated in the Parliament of Great Britain.

unprecedented demand. Three facts relating to the effect of the measure in the neighbouring State of Rhode Island may guide us to a correct conclusion in this matter. First, during the week following its passage through the legislature, firms who sold liquor in the city of Providence did as much business as they had ever done before in a twelvemonth;—second, as soon as it received the sanction of the authorities, private clubs were instituted where spirits were kept in a press for the use of the members, and to one of these presses alone there were 300 keys;—third, at Newport, a fashionable bathing place on the coast, much frequented by southerners, no attempt was ever made to carry out the provisions of the bill, the bar-rooms existing there just as before. It is not necessary for me to have recourse to any elaborate reasoning on this subject; the few hints which I have thrown out may serve to show that society cannot be reformed by a *coup de main*, or permanently benefited by a hasty adoption of over stringent laws. When listening to the sanguine speeches and predictions of the advocates of this Maine Law in the United States, I have often been tempted to reply in the words of Marcus Andronicus to his kinsman Titus.*

> "O brother, speak with possibilities,
> And do not break into these deep extremes."†

* "Titus Andronicus," Act iii., Scene i.

† By misrepresenting the foregoing testimony, certain parties who have more zeal than discretion, and certain others whose advocacy brings even good projects into disrepute, have attempted to weaken its force. It is because I feel deeply interested in promoting a rational feeling against the excessive use of intoxicating drinks, and in favour of judicious laws to prevent the increase and regulate the practice of gin-palaces, that I deprecate agitation to obtain a measure which repels all wise and moderate men, and can never please any but the select few who are never happy except when running into ridiculous extremes. The temperance party in this country will have to revise their modes of procedure, and be more particular in their choice of agents, if they wish to produce that impression upon society which is their professed object. The people of England care little about mere theorists, and don't believe in Utopia. They will laugh at folks who propose a Maine Liquor Law, but have shown themselves always ready to consider well-digested schemes of practical reform.

One word, before I close this chapter, to those of our hard-working artisans, who are ever and anon, during the intervals of their daily toil, casting a longing eye towards America, as a land specially blessed by Providence and "flowing with milk and honey." Some of you may have friends and relations, hewing down the timber in the great western forests, or gradually acquiring a handsome competence by patient industry in the cities of the Atlantic slope, and you hear from them occasionally about the free political institutions, the high wages, the gratuitous schools, and the other inducements offered by the great republic to the labouring classes of Europe. They tell you, perhaps, that land of the finest quality, and in the most desirable situations, may be purchased at 5s. an acre, and that when no buyers appear, the price is sometimes reduced to 4s., or even 3s., in order to encourage settlers; that all men are there on an equality, as far as social distinctions are concerned; and that tradesmen of every description may easily find employment in any place between Boston and St. Paul. These representations, I know, are made by every mail, and thousands of our fellow countrymen are at this moment hesitating whether to make the best of it at home, or to cross the North Atlantic for the purpose of pushing their fortunes under the rising star of empire. Now there are certain requisites of success on the part of an emigrant, which it may be well for me to mention, viz youth, health, activity, industry, and sobriety. One who is indolent, or intemperate, or who cannot apply himself sedulously to his task, will very soon find his mistake if he venture amongst the Yankees. The remarkable number of druggists' shops, the vast army of physicians, the placards announcing cough mixtures, and cures for fever, ague, and rheumatism, the pale sickly youths, and drooping maidens, whom the traveller meets every day on the other side of the Alleghanies, afford ample evidence that America is the last place where a man ought to go, unless his strength and constitution fit

him for vigorous exertion. The valleys of the Mississippi and Missouri, the region of the Great Lakes, and the wheat lands of Ohio, have certainly no such deadly climate as that which deters men from settling in Central America or Sierra Leone; but those who are not blest with a robust frame, will find them far more trying to the physical powers than this little sea-girt isle. The extremes of heat and cold, the undrained marshes, and dense dark woods, the mode of living, and unremitting toil, soon enfeeble and shatter the constitution of one who might, even in cold rainy Scotland, live to a good old age. Further, let those who have arrived at middle life, and who therefore cannot easily change their habits, think twice about it before they go to America. If they act rashly in this matter, they may soon experience the truth of the proverb, that "all is not gold that glitters," and long, when too late, for the home and the locality which they have forsaken. There are not a few Englishmen of this class in the United States who bitterly regret having crossed the stormy sea. The case is different, however, with those who have strong and dutiful children arrived at men's and women's estate, ready to support them when they land on the foreign shore. America offers great inducements to those having numerous families; many aged patriarchs are living there now in the midst of their sons and daughters, their flocks and their herds, supplied with all the comforts and even the luxuries of life, who, had they remained here, would in all probability have been still working in the barnyard or the factory. But to all intending emigrants, young as well as old, those who have earnings to invest and those who have not, I would say, you must not expect a paradise; if labour is well paid, clothing and house-rent are dear also; and he who anticipates a garden of self-producing bananas in Illinois or Wisconsin, will one day repent his folly in sackcloth and ashes. It is no child's play to cut down American timber, or bring into cultivation the new land of the West. It has prematurely impaired the constitution and shortened the days of not a

few who entered upon their task with all the buoyancy of youth, and all the energy of the Anglo-Saxon character.

To those who have resolved to bid good-bye to the scenes of their childhood, and to seek under the star-spangled banner a new field for exertion and another home, need I say, do not forget your native country, the fountain-head from whence all the greatness of the United States has flowed; in your log-hut, beneath the maple-trees, cherish a kindly remembrance of the land where your forefathers sleep; in the public assembly, at the polling stations, in the exercise of your rights as freemen, always keep in mind that he who promotes a good feeling between Great Britain and America, will be regarded in after ages as a benefactor to his race.

CHAPTER XII.

Consequences of religious persecution—Its influence on the colonization of America—Theological colleges in the United States—Statistics of the various sects—The Methodists and Baptists—Distinction of classes in Transatlantic congregations—The Episcopalians and Independents.

THE impolicy of persecution for conscience sake, even in its most modified form, will now be readily admitted by all intelligent men; indeed, every year witnesses large accessions to the numbers of those who agree with Mr. Macaulay,* that "people who preach to rulers the duty of employing power to propagate truth, would do well to remember that falsehood, though no match for truth alone, has often been found more than a match for truth and power together." The student of ecclesiastical history can recal to mind many instances in which the very measures used by religious tyrants have proved of signal benefit to the cause which they wished to destroy. In some of these we can trace the operation of natural laws

* Review of Mr. Gladstone's work on "Church and State." Travellers' Library Edition, p. 69.

—publicity leading to investigation, and despotic proceedings engendering sympathy for the oppressed; but in others we feel ourselves constrained to recognise the immediate agency of an overruling providence. Zurich, the capital of the Swiss Reformation, where Zwingluis thundered against the corruptions of Rome, owes its great prosperity to an edict of the Papacy which in the sixteenth century compelled the Protestant citizens of Locarno, on the southern slope of the Alps, to leave their native land. They, migrating across the mountains, brought with them that knowledge of manufactures which has been of such vital importance to the city I have named.

One hundred years later the Catholic princes of Germany combined to root out the adherents of Lutheranism, and to re-establish everywhere the religion of Rome. For a time success attended their arms; but the emergency raised up a hero, the brilliancy of whose success filled Europe with admiration. The name of Wallenstein and the exploits of Tilly paved the way for conquests which have procured for Gustavus Adolphus a deathless fame. "Thus it followed," says Ranke, in his "History of the Popes,"* "as a necessary consequence, that an enterprise, originated and sanctioned by the Catholic opposition for political purposes, resulted in the advantage of Protestantism."

Again, the incredible exertions made by Louis the Fourteenth to annihilate dissent in France, produced a re-action immediately on his death which threatened to sap the very foundations of priestly power; men who had by violence been driven to conform became reckless innovators, and measures undertaken for the express purpose of giving to the Church undisputed sway, proved, in the long run, most hurtful to its influence.

Or, to take an illustration from the history of our own country, had not the Stuarts in general, and James the Second in particular, favoured despotism and popery, the people of England would not have cherished so

* Bohn's "Standard Library," vol. ii., p. 283.

fondly as they do now that love of liberty and attachment to the principles of the Reformation, which have given them such a commanding position among the nations of the globe. Opinions, which in the time of Cromwell were peculiar to Independents, became, before the accession of William and Mary, the sentiments of all but the fanatical adherents of the exiled race. The attempts made by Rome to restore its supremacy in Great Britain, proved the surest means of making that very government the mainstay of Protestantism.

Finally, the Conventicle Act of 1664, by which it was declared seditious and unlawful for more than five persons, exclusive of the family, to meet together for religious worship according to any other than the ritual of the English National Church, — the reiterated attempts made to compel uniformity to its observances— and the vexatious enactments passed, from time to time, to arrest the progress of Puritanism, were the means used by God to establish on the other side of the Atlantic ecclesiastical institutions destined to spread over countries far more extensive than the combined monarchies of Europe. So strikingly has God thus made the wrath of man to praise Him, that with truth we may say that the persecutors have more reason than the persecuted to exclaim with the French poet,—

> "Périsse à jamais l'affreuse politique
> Qui prétend sur les cœurs un pouvoir despotique
> Qui veut le fer en main convertir les mortels,
> Qui au sang hérétique arrose les autels."

The history of colonisation in the United States furnishes the most remarkable examples of the manner in which the Almighty has made the projects of religious tyrants to further the cause of religious liberty. Apart altogether from New England, the home of the Pilgrim Fathers, the history of whose settlement is well known to you all, a great portion of America east of the Alleghanies was first peopled by those whom clerical oppression had banished from their fatherland to seek rest and peace in another hemisphere. The earliest attempt

made to form a colony in America may be traced to a party of French Huguenots; Peter Minnets afterwards led over a body of persecuted Walloons; refugees from Virginia founded the original townships in the Carolinas; Pennsylvania owed its existence to the desire of the Quaker community to seek in America that freedom to worship which had been denied them in Europe; and a company of Covenanters, flying from their enemies in Scotland, rendered Jersey the cradle of Presbyterianism on the other side of the Atlantic. Mr. Hepworth Dixon, in his "Life of William Penn,"* relates that the only hope of that benevolent man for the future, "lay in a vague but romantic dream that a virtuous and holy empire, equally free from bigotry and the dead formalism of state religions, might one day be founded in these magnificent wildernesses of the New World which had so often formed a topic of the family conversation." How far this dream has proved a reality it will be my present object to show. The Puritans, who from the 'Mayflower' landed on the bleak shores of Cape Cod, sought only a quiet home and liberty to erect meeting houses for the service of God; little did they think that before the middle of the nineteenth century their descendants would exercise a mighty influence in forming the character of a nation destined, at no distant day, to spread the knowledge of Christianity from Torres Straits to Cape Horn.

New England has a rigorous climate and sterile soil; but industry and frugality have rendered it far more wealthy than countries which Nature has profusely blessed; and the same strict attention to moral and religious duties which characterized the first settlers has given their children a position over an entire continent most potential for good. "It appears," remarks Miss Bremer,† "that the reformers and the lecturers who develop the spiritual and intellectual life in America,

* Page 23.

† "Homes of the New World," vol. i., p. 45. New York: Harper and Brothers.

and call forth its ideal, come from the Northern States, from New England, and in particular from Massachusetts, the oldest home of the pilgrims and the Puritans." I was much struck by the testimony borne by the rough inhabitants of the western country to the praiseworthy efforts of the missionaries and schoolmasters from the east, who act as leaven in a society formed of materials which otherwise might prove dangerous to the security of the Union. A Boston man may be found occupying some honourable situation in every village of the Mississippian valley; and through the exertions of this class, Socialism, Mormonism, and other systems subversive of good government, have been prevented from taking firm root or producing their legitimate effect on the morals of the population. If it were not for the religious zeal of Massachusetts, the inhabitants of vast territories in the far west would be left without instruction to the uncontrolled exercise of their lawless passions and the evil example of infidels and rationalists from abroad. In the South, too, where drunken quarrels, murders, and outrages of every kind still abound, where the people, by their free votes sanction the repudiation of just debts and refuse to adopt an educational system, where you find a general laxity of principle and disregard of social ties, all good men look to New England influence for the ultimate salvation of society. By means of commerce, and in schools, the sons and daughters of the North-eastern States are gradually acquiring a position, as well in the city of New Orleans as on the plantations of Arkansas, which will one day render them the virtual rulers of the country, and the reformers of every abuse at present retarding its moral and material advancement.

Before recording my own impressions of the state of religion in the American Union, or narrating what I saw and heard relative to this subject, it will be necessary to have recourse to some facts and statistics which may prevent misapprehension and enable us to form

more correct conclusions. Too many travellers in the western hemisphere have imagined that the circle of their acquaintanceship faithfully represented the ecclesiastical opinions prevalent in the country, and without any previous information derived from tables or books, they have been misled by the plausible statements of interested parties, and have judged of things in general from the particular section which came under their own observation. Miss Bremer, for example, gives a most ridiculous prominence to the schemes of social and religious fanatics, into whose society she happened to have been thrown, but of whose very existence nine-tenths of the people are profoundly ignorant. The same authoress also remarks, "The two great divisions of the Church in the United States appear to be Trinitarian and Unitarian," while in reality the latter are a mere handful in comparison with the former. Some clever writers on America might have spent a few days very profitably studying the census returns, the guide books, and the almanac.

There were, in 1854, forty-four theological colleges in the United States, having 127 professors, and attended by 1449 students. Of these ten were Presbyterian, nine Baptist, six Independent, and three Episcopalian, the others being connected with the smaller Protestant denominations. Their libraries contained very nearly 200,000 volumes. It has been the fashion on this side of the Atlantic to sneer at these institutions, and no doubt they do not all come up to our standard of what is required of divinity halls; but the seminaries of Andover, of Princeton, of Yale, and of Auburn, need no panegyric of mine. They occupy the very foremost rank as schools of theology; their teachers and graduates stand on a footing of equality with those of Edinburgh and Göttingen; and in them a body of men has been educated for the Christian ministry, far superior in theological attainments to those brought up either at Oxford or at Cambridge.

The respective strength of the various religious denominations may be best seen by a reference to the following table, compiled from the census of 1850 :—

Denominations.	No. of Churches.	Aggregate Accommodation.
Methodist	12,467	4,209,333
Baptist	8,791	3,130,878
Presbyterian	4,584	2,040,316
Independent	1,674	795,177
Episcopal	1,422	625,213
Lutheran	1,203	531,100
Roman Catholic	1,112	620,950
Christian	812	296,050
Friends	714	282,823
Union	619	213,552
Universalists	494	205,462
Free	361	108,605
Moravians	331	112,185
German Reformed	327	156,932
Dutch Reformed	324	181,986
Unitarian	243	137,367
Mormonite	110	29,900
Tunker	52	35,075
Jewish	31	16,575
Swedenborgian	15	5,070
Minor Sects.	325	115,347
Total	36,011	13,849,896

The value of the Church property may be estimated at about eighty-seven millions of dollars, or nearly eighteen millions of pounds sterling.

It appears from the above tabular statement that the Methodists and Baptists are numerically not only the strongest sects, but united are stronger than all the others put together. There exists, however, considerable diversity of sentiment among the members of both these religious parties; and perhaps it may scarcely be fair to classify them as undivided whilst really to some extent

composed of separate communions. Their strength lies chiefly in the southern and western States, where they are the pioneers of Christianity in the wilderness, carrying it with indefatigable zeal into districts only partially settled and recently explored. They may be styled the home missionaries of America, and in this capacity are invaluable, although trusting too much to mere excitement of the feelings, and laying undue stress, when preaching to men almost in heathen ignorance, upon doctrines peculiar to their own creed. True religion gains little from wild harangues resulting in five hundred people being immersed in a tub at the foot of the pulpit stairs, or from appeals addressed to backwoodsmen in favour of this particular mode of baptism. These two denominations in general agree in objecting to theological colleges, and an educated ministry; consequently an utter want of refinement, and expressions which a well-instructed community would not tolerate, frequently distinguish their pulpit oratory. A friend of mine in Virginia told me that he once heard a Baptist preacher say, "Brethren, your former pastor was in the habit of feeding you with fat things, such as puddings, and pies; I am now to bring you back to the boiled ham and greens." Another, trying to familiarize his hearers with the character of Our Saviour, exclaimed, "My friends, he was just another General Jackson for ye." And a Methodist in the West, waxing fervent about justification by faith, is reported to have remarked, "It is as impossible for a sinner to get to heaven without Christ, as for an eel, well anointed with lard, to climb up a pole, tail foremost." A marked change has however of late years taken place in many parts of the country in the sentiments prevalent among the members of both these sects, with regard to the proper tuition of those designed for the ministry, caused in a great measure by the admirable work on this subject published by Mr. Angell James, of Birmingham. Schools of divinity have already been established in several places, and many of the Methodist and Baptist pastors in the large towns have received quite as good an education as

their brethren in other sects. This peculiarity of theirs attracts towards them the poorer and worst instructed classes of the population, and no stranger travelling in the United States can fail to observe the absence of that admixture of ranks in a congregation which is the glory of Christianity. The church recognises no distinction between rich and poor, master and servant, bond and free; but you may go into hundreds of Episcopalian or Presbyterian chapels in America without seeing a single working-man, whilst the uneducated orators belonging to the denominations just referred to every Sabbath address thousands who gain their livelihood by the sweat of their brow. If an Englishman did not know where to look for them, he might, even after a residence of some duration on the other side of the Atlantic, imagine that the poorer classes there never went to church at all.

The Episcopalians, whose first bishop was consecrated only sixty-nine years ago at Aberdeen in Scotland, have now 33 bishops and 1600 clergymen throughout the Union. The rich and fashionable very generally adhere to this communion. Puseyism some years since made considerable progress amongst the junior clergy; but its doctrines have lately been decidedly on the wane: the churches where they were preached are deserted, whilst crowded congregations attend the ministrations of the evangelical party. Several intelligent men remarked to me that the soil of America was not congenial to the growth of such views, and that whatever chance there might be for some doctrines opposed to the usual belief of orthodox Protestants, there was none for Anglo-Catholicism. Some of the most solemn and powerful discourses to which I ever listened were delivered in places of worship connected with the Episcopalian Church of the United States.

Congregationalism still maintains its hold over the people of New England. During the present century, the Baptists and Episcopalians have both increased considerably in that part of the Union; but Independency,

notwithstanding the Unitarian heresy, is still, and in all probability will ever be, in the ascendant. The sons of the Puritans retain the distinctive views on church government which compelled their fathers to leave their native land; a great and growing nation now professes them, and that very persecution of dissenters in the seventeenth century has been the means in the hands of God of spreading their principles over the continent of North America.

CHAPTER XIII.

Subject continued—The Old and New School Presbyterians—Causes of their disagreement—The Unitarian heresy—American places of worship—Sacred music—Terms of Church communion—Style of preaching—Increase of religious feeling of late years—Albert Barnes—Dr. Addison Alexander—Dr. Tyng—Henry Ward Beecher—Mr. Everts—Mr. Chapin, the universalist orator.

Most nearly allied to the Congregationalists are the Presbyterians, who flourish chiefly in the middle and western States, and, taking everything into consideration, may be safely regarded as the most influential and intelligent denomination in the Union. They are divided into two great bodies, the Old School and the New. Between the moderate men of these parties little or no difference of opinion exists, and several of them to me lamented the separation. The preaching of the former is, however, in general, more Calvinistic than that of the latter; and though the New School has not yet had time to develop its action, it has already exercised a most beneficial influence in rousing the church from its torpor, in purifying its communion, in originating schemes of benevolent enterprise, and in altering the style of pulpit addresses, so as to awaken men from a false security to holy action and serious thought. The atonement question continues still to be a bone of contention between the divines of these two sections; and another cause of the disruption was the refusal of the Old School ministers any longer

to support the American Board of Foreign Missions, a general catholic society, like the London Missionary, having its head quarters in Boston. The Reformed Dutch Church, especially in the State of New York, has likewise a great many congregations, second to none in point of intelligence and Christian zeal.

So similar are the views held by the Presbyterians and the Independents of America, so closely bound together are the two sects, that most people regard them as one, and use their respective appellations as convertible terms. In Connecticut I found that the Congregationalists, who form a large majority of the population, are usually called Presbyterians; and not only there, but in other parts of the country people seemed surprised that I should speak of the denominations as distinct and separate. When a Boston man goes southward, he naturally joins a Presbyterian Society; and a New Yorker removing to Massachusetts, connects himself, as a matter of course, with the Congregationalists. I have met ministers who have presided over churches governed in both ways, and who thought the difference so immaterial that they would just as soon accept a charge in one body as in the other.

The first church in America which embraced Unitarian views was an Episcopalian one, at the head of School-street in Boston. Several of the old Puritan churches followed its example, and the new views continued to spread till the wealth and influence of the city had become nearly without exception Socinian. We need not go very far or search very deep for the causes of this change. Dr. Channing graphically describes both its origin and its progress, when writing to Blanco White, in the year 1839: he says, "I would that I could look to Unitarianism with more hope. But this system was a protest of the understanding against absurd doctrines, rather than the work of deep religious principle, and was early paralyzed by the mixture of a material philosophy, and fell too much into the hands of scholars and political reformers; and the consequence is a want of vitality and

force, which gives us little hope of its accomplishing much under its present auspices, or in its present form." The fact is that the hypercalvinistic style of preaching and the fanatical manners current at a certain period in the history of New England, gave rise to a revulsion of public sentiment, and from one extreme the people ran to the other." Andrew Fuller, narrating his own experience in England, says, "My father and mother were dissenters of the Calvinistic persuasion, and were in the habit of hearing Mr. Eve, a Baptist minister, who, being what is here termed high in his sentiments, or tinged with false Calvinism, had little or nothing to say to the unconverted. I therefore never considered myself as any way concerned in what I heard from the pulpit." It was preaching of this sort, treating man as a mere machine, and leaving out of view repentance and faith, which threw so many churches in New England into the arms of Socinianism; and those most intimately acquainted with the local ecclesiastical history of that country can bring forward remarkable individual examples of the certainty with which this cause produced its natural effect. One might attend service in many Unitarian churches throughout America without detecting false doctrine. It is a fashionable system of formalism rather than an active heresy. The addresses from the pulpit will strike an Englishman as very similar in substance and style to those delivered in many places of worship connected with his own Established Church. They are moral essays, not expositions of biblical truth exhortations which might as well be derived from the Koran as from the Scriptures; admonitions to fulfil social and moral duties rather than calls to embrace that Gospel which apostles and prophets proclaimed. The majority of those who attend the Unitarian chapels in Boston most certainly do so not because of any intellectual belief in the dogmas of that sect, but simply on account of their being the fashionable sanctuaries, where men can safely go without incurring the danger of having their consciences roused. But, even this denomination

is divided into two distinct parties, who have little in common with respect either to creed or practice. The serious Unitarians have introduced prayer meetings; some of their ministers, Mr. Huntingdon, for example, preach with great faithfulness; and in many ways they exhibit a tendency to orthodoxy: on the other hand, Mr. Starr King and those who agree with him seem to wish rather to widen the breach between them and evangelical bodies; occasionally, one after another of this class adopts first Universalism, next Transcendentalism, and then Pantheism, till having tried all the *isms* in succession, and taking something from each, he is prepared to agree with Theodore Parker, who in his "Discourses"* declares, "He that worships truly, by whatever form, worships the only God: he hears the prayer, whether called Brahma, Pan, or Lord, or called by no name at all! Each people has its prophets, and its saints; and many a swarthy Indian, who bowed down to wood and stone—many a grim-faced Calmuc, who worshipped the great God of Storms—many a Grecian peasant, who did homage to Phœbus Apollo, when the sun rose or went down—yes, many a savage, his hands smeared all over with human sacrifice,—shall come from the east, and the west, and sit down in the kingdom of God, with Mqses and Zoroaster, with Socrates and Jesus." It is remarkable how many American Unitarians have, after various changes, adopted extravagancies of this sort. There are scarcely two ministers of the denomination who entertain the same sentiments, or could agree upon a creed. They preach to very thin audiences in the afternoon, it being too much trouble for their fashionable hearers to go to church twice a day. Unitarianism only keeps its ground even in Boston, while the Evangelical bodies are making decided progress. In the country, it never obtained a footing of any consequence, nor can it ever, from its spirit and policy, exercise a powerful influence upon the masses of the people.

St. George's Episcopal church in Stuyvesant-square,

* Page 83.

New York, may be taken as a specimen of the chapels lately erected in the aristocratic quarters of American cities. It is built of massive stone; when completed will have two tall spires; a rectory in the same architectural style adjoins it, and the carved oak ornaments, painted windows, and beautiful altar, must strike every one with admiration. It is seated for upwards of 2000 people, and the galleries are supported not by pillars, but by wedge-like beams firmly attached to the lateral walls. Many of these fashionable sanctuaries remain closed during the hottest summer months, when minister and people remove to the springs or the sea-side. I went in the afternoon of the first Sunday which I spent in America last year, to a well-known Presbyterian place of worship, and was at its porch confronted by a placard announcing that it would not re-open until the first of September. Leaving out of account these splendid new erections in the Italian and Gothic styles, American chapels in general may be described as oblong structures of brick or wood, painted white, and fitted up internally with the greatest possible attention to comfort. The nicely stuffed mahogany seats with footstools and sloping backs, the carpeted passages, and the speaker's rostrum, consisting not of a pulpit, but of a table of rosewood with a marble slab, a desk in the centre, and a sofa behind it, present a striking contrast to the rude buildings in which our countrymen worship God. Some of my readers may recollect the passage in "Waverley,"* where the hero of the story "distinguished, not indeed the ringing of bells, but the tinkling of something like a hammer against the side of an old, mossy, green, inverted porridge pot, that hung in an open booth, of the size and shape of a parrot's cage, erected to grace the east end of a building resembling an old barn." Our transatlantic friends must be quite at a loss to understand this description; for they can scarcely believe that the Presbyterians of Scotland do as painful penance in the chapel pews, as the Roman Catholics on the cathe-

* Vol. i., p. 310.

dral floors. The stillness, too, of American congregations will attract the attention of those accustomed to the constant coughing, clearing of throats, and shuffling of feet, which must appear most unseemly and irreverent to a stranger visiting this country. All the worshippers are in their seats before the service begins; or if an unlooked-for detention has rendered any individual late, he comes in quietly, and not in that hasty, careless style affected by people on this side of the Atlantic. The preponderance of the male sex struck me as a remarkable and a very promising characteristic of Christian assemblies in various parts of the Union; I observed this not only in the large cities of the Atlantic seaboard, but in the Mississippian valley, and on the shores of the lakes. How different such a state of things from that on the continent of Europe, where you seldom see men in church at all! The organ is universally used by the various religious bodies in America, and if many chapels in the country do not possess one, the reason will be found not in any obsolete prejudice against its solemn tones, but merely in the expense of the instrument. The music is generally suitable, affecting, and simple; nevertheless, the people do not join in the psalmody. This unpleasant and unaccountable peculiarity attaches to all denominations, more particularly the Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists, who seem to think that they can praise God by proxy through the performance of a band. I have frequently felt inclined to ask the question, Are places of worship mere concert halls? "This, however," says Miss Bremer,* "I have to object against the hymns of the United States, that they are sung by a trained choir in the gallery, and all the rest of the congregation sit silently and listen, just as they would sit in a concert-room. Some accompany them reading from their hymn-books, but others never open theirs. When I have occasionally lifted up my voice with the singers, I have seen my neighbours look at me with surprise." This description is strictly accu-

* Vol. i., p. 241.

rate; I have likewise observed every eye turned towards me when I joined in the tune; surely our intelligent friends in America do not believe that any mere instrumental or choral music can be so acceptable to God as the voices of His worshipping people, melodiously blended in an anthem of praise. There will be song in heaven, arising not from the seraphim, not only from the four and twenty elders, who, with harps and golden vials full of odours, fall down before the Lamb, but from a countless multitude redeemed out of every kindred, and tribe, and people, standing on the sea of glass which is before the throne.

Most Protestant sects in the United States receive into their communion only such as bear evidence of vital Christianity. There is a much more marked distinction than with us, between those who are members of churches and those who are not. Persons with whom I conversed maintained that this separation gives religion an healthy tone, and operates most favourably for its strength and progress. They regretted at the same time the excessive inquisitorialness in certain parts of the country, especially in the rural districts of New England, where a zeal for purity without discretion has instituted tests of fellowship having no sanction in the Holy Scriptures. There are ecclesiastical organizations in America into which none but teetotallers would be received, whose members durst not attend an evening party, regarding dancing as in itself a sinful act, and yet permitting their office-bearers to fail repeatedly in business without investigation or remark, although these very failures were looked upon as fraudulent by the entire mercantile community. Some folks on the other side of the Atlantic, seem to think that it is impossible to do evil in matters where dollars are concerned.

The American style of preaching struck me in 1846 as too lifeless and cold; but in 1854 this seemed to have undergone a change, and people who formerly defended the phlegmatic manner of their clergymen agreed in praising the altered mode of pulpit addresses.

The fanatical vehemence of uneducated preachers tended, it appears to me, to drive men of prudence and refinement to the opposite extreme; and perhaps the decrease of the former, combined with greater intercourse between the United States and Europe, have brought about the happy medium. One of my principal objects in visiting America was thoroughly to understand its religious state and prospects; and with this in view, besides endeavouring to form as general an acquaintance as possible with those likely to be best informed on this subject, I usually attended church three times every Sunday, not selecting sanctuaries noted for the talents of their pastors or the influence of their congregations, but entering wherever I saw an open door, and confining my visits neither to particular sects, nor to particular quarters of the cities. On looking over my journal, I find accounts of services in places of worship connected with the Reformed Presbyterian, the Methodist Episcopal, the Unitarian, the Reformed Dutch, the Universalist, and the Wesleyan Union Methodist denominations, besides those of twelve sermons in Episcopalian, five in Baptist, thirteen in Independent, and fifteen in Presbyterian churches. I select only six of the most remarkable on which to bestow a passing word; of the others suffice it to say that not one sermon preached in orthodox chapels was objectionable, while the majority were distinguished by marked ability, and struck me as greatly above the average of discourses which one hears either in England or in Scotland. They were also sound expositions of Scripture, enforced with apt illustrations, and followed up by earnest appeals to the various classes in the auditories. Some of them will for ever remain impressed on my mind, as eloquent and solemn beyond expectation. In scarcely a single instance, too, did I find a place of worship only partially filled. If attendance at divine service forms any test of a country's Christianity, then the Northern, Central, and Western States of America are the most Christian territories in the habitable globe. In many cases I could scarcely get a seat, chapels holding 1200 to 2000 people

being quite full. A great improvement has taken place in this respect since my former visit in 1846, and several friends spoke to me of the increasing interest in religion manifested of late years throughout the Union at large.

Of all the American clergy, perhaps no one has a more extensive European reputation than Mr. Albert Barnes, whose commentaries on Scripture and other theological works have already been circulated far and wide in Protestant countries. Before the dawn of day the light of his study-lamp may be seen flickering in the gloom, by any one passing the sanctum where so much has been written by a man still in the flower of his age. An early riser, a diligent student, an economist of opportunities and time, he has found leisure in the midst of his pastoral duties to perform essential service to the cause of biblical literature. His church, in Washington-square, Philadelphia, belonging to the New School Presbyterian denomination, was crowded by an intelligent auditory when I heard him. He preached from the 59th and 60th verses of the 119th Psalm, one of the most closely-reasoned, clear, and impressive discourses to which I ever listened. The drift of the address was to prove the free agency and responsibility of man.

If Mr. Barnes enjoys the greatest celebrity among New School divines, Dr. Joseph Addison Alexander, of Princeton College, is the "Magnus Apollo" of the Old School Presbyterian church. I mixed with a congregation numbering at least 1500, who last winter were present in the Dutch Reformed place of worship, Fifth Avenue, New York, when he delivered one of a series of lectures under the auspices of the Young Men's Christian Association connected with that chapel. Taking as his text the words in Isaiah, 53rd chapter, 3rd verse, "He is despised and rejected of men," he reviewed in a masterly manner the cold reception with which Christianity met in a world generally ready to prove credulous enough, and welcome with *éclat* any new religious system, however unintelligible or absurd. Dr. Alexander is one of the profoundest thinkers in America. His powerful

intellect, perspicacity of arrangement and finished style of composition, showed themselves in almost every sentence of this prelection.

The Episcopalians in the United States can boast of not a few remarkable pulpit orators, first and foremost amongst whom stands Dr. Stephen H. Tyng. He now preaches in the splendid edifice situated in Stuyvesant-square, New York, to which as an architectural ornament I have already alluded. No minister throughout the country occupies a more distinguished position as a platform speaker. His ready command of language, powerful periods, and frequent rhetorical flights, ensure for him on all occasions a numerous audience. The first time I heard him address a meeting he was applauded once and again to the very echo. In the pulpit he is fervent, pointed, and startling; fond of practical subjects, he states his sentiments with a terseness which impresses them at once on the mind, and every stranger must be struck with his felicity of expression and unhesitating plainness of speech. He is quite noted for rebuking prevailing follies. I heard him once administer to his people a severe reprimand for extravagance in dress. Another discourse from Exodus, 24th chapter, 12th verse, was one of the ablest to which I have ever listened in any country. His congregation is not only numerous, but liberal, influential, and zealous in every good cause.

The Beecher family are well known to the ecclesiastical world on the other side of the Atlantic. The aged father, in his anxiety to serve the slave, removed from Boston to Cincinnati, that he might be nearer the States whose institutions he had devoted all his energies to reform. His son, Dr. Edward Beecher, as a writer and a divine, enjoys a distinction seldom attained by one at his period of life; his daughter, Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, presents the most remarkable example in the history of literature, of one publication obtaining for its writer a world-wide fame; and of all American preachers none possesses such a wonderful power over his audience

or attracts so great a crowd as Henry Ward Beecher, of Brooklyn. Three thousand people, alternately laughing and weeping, every Sunday hang upon his lips. There is too much excitement and singularity about his mode of instruction for my taste. The service altogether struck me as deficient in solemnity and decorum; and however sacred may be the cause of liberty, men go to church to hear the Gospel, not to listen to the wrongs of the African race: but as an orator, a master of invective, sarcasm and declamation, very few either in Europe or America will bear a comparison with Mr. Beecher. From the words, "Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous;"*—I heard him pour forth a torrent of indignant eloquence, which seemed to sweep over the vast congregation like a tropical tornado. Many a tear rolled over cheeks unused to weeping; scarcely was time given to wipe them away before the same features were forced into a smile; and during the most solemn appeals a silence positively painful prevailed. The speaker's change of voice, posture and manner, added not a little to the interest felt in his discourse.

The Rev. Mr. Everts, of the Baptist church, Walnut-street, Louisville, in Kentucky, may be unknown to fame, I certainly never heard of him as a Mercury among transatlantic divines; but one Sabbath evening while residing in that city, I joined a stream of people hurrying to attend a lecture delivered by him, on the probable effect on Christianity of the Chinese Revolution, and the anticipated European war. The preacher spoke with excessive vehemence, reminding me more of Scotch than American clergymen; but from the second chapter of Isaiah he struck out an original train of thought, riveting the attention of his hearers by vigorous suggestion, clear reasoning, and forcible language. Whether or not the high compliments he paid to Great Britain excited the enthusiasm of the choir, I do not know, but un-

* Matthew, chap. xxiii. ver. 29.

doubtedly they sang the concluding hymn to the tune of "God save the Queen."

In the course of my wanderings through the streets of New York, I stumbled into the Universalist Chapel below Prince-street, in Broadway, and heard the Rev. E. H. Chapin, the most celebrated orator of that religious sect. He is a short, thick-set man, full of energy and fire, has a distinct and powerful voice, and does not dress in the usual clerical costume. He preached from Luke, 19th chapter, 41st verse: Jesus weeping over Jerusalem. It was in some respects the greatest rhetorical effort at which it has been my good fortune to be present, either on this or the other side of the ocean. For brilliancy of description and splendour of imagery I do not think it could well be exceeded. I can almost fancy that I hear him yet apostrophising the Holy City, as, looking down from Olivet, he pointed out its temple and palaces, and recalled the associations connected with it in the minds both of the Jew and the Gentile, the Christian and the Mussulman, the American who dwells in a new country far away over the sea and the Arab who feeds his camels by the ruins of Tadmor in the wilderness. I thought of the well-known passage in "Tancred" descriptive of Jerusalem by moonlight; but Chapin attempted and succeeded in a higher flight than ventured on by the genius of Disraeli. The speaker proceeded to say that his text illustrated in the first place, "the intense humanity of the Saviour," under which head he declared that the majority of Christians at the present day remove Him from their sympathies in a vain attempt to do him honour. This part of his discourse was distinguished for its touching and stirring appeals and its undisguised Socinianism. In the second place, he remarked, the text showed "the philanthropy of Christ, of whom he spoke as a manifestation of the Divine love." Then followed a wonderfully eloquent peroration on the love of God to men, which he declared was the one and the only moral influence fitted to regenerate the world. Lastly, to a congregation composed of the vulgar genteel, sadly overdressed and by

no means first class in appearance, yet perfectly still and attentive to every word uttered, he addressed a concluding appeal of striking power, and called upon them to look forward to that happy time when the influence of God's love shall be felt by ALL WHO NEED IT, and when UNIVERSAL HUMANITY shall respond "Hosanna in the highest."

CHAPTER XIV.

Subject continued—Observance of the Sabbath—Recent English testimony to the power of Christianity in America—The Bible, Tract, and Missionary Societies—Statistics of church accommodation compared with those of England and Scotland—Effects of having no State Church—Recognition, as a nation, of religion—Roman Catholicism—Popular feeling against the priests and Irish voters—Policy of the Roman Church in the West—Decrease of its adherents—Dissensions among them—The great Republic not a genial soil for the papal tree.

IN many parts of the United States, New England in particular, the traveller will find copies of the Bible lying on the table of every hotel bedroom, steamboat cabin, and railway waiting-apartment. The circulation of the Scriptures throughout the Union is enormous; for wherever the Anglo-American goes, the Christian's text-book follows with its ennobling sentiments to elevate and refine. The stranger will be surprised to observe the quietness and decorum which prevail on Sabbath, even in cities with a population of the most miscellaneous character. The New Englanders, if possible, keep the day more strictly than the Scotch. Their trains and steamers stop running, and very few neglect the assembling of themselves together. I do not remember in the course of all my wanderings to have seen a single person working at a trade, or a single store open on Sunday. Even in New York, notwithstanding the vast number of resident foreigners, you cannot get an omnibus, the carts and wagons disappear, and the chief thoroughfares, crowded during other days with men

and carriages, become on the Sabbath still as those of a country village. Broadway, bustling as it is on the last day of the week, on the first reminded me of George's-street in Edinburgh. You see occasionally a pleasure party on their way to Westchester county or Staten Island, but public opinion sets in strongly in favour of Sabbath observance, and at church hours thousands of people going to and from the various places of worship throng the pavements. I now and then took a walk through the poorer districts of the city, but invariably found all the shops shut, except eating-houses and liquor stores, frequented by French and Germans. The same remark applies to the smaller towns, at least to those of them where the uneducated Irish have not settled in such numbers as to influence the general practice. In Chicago I observed beer-shops, cigar divans, oyster cellars and restaurants open, whilst the shops were all closed; but, as on the previous day, I had heard, not only German and French, but Dutch and Norwegian spoken in the streets, I was at no loss to account for the circumstance. The manners of the people in the region of the lakes are to some extent affected by the example of sceptics and rationalists from abroad, but the Anglo-Saxon reverence for religion has nevertheless even there obtained an ascendency which nothing can now weaken, much less destroy. On Sunday morning you see a long line of farmers' wagons approaching the village chapel, where the horses are made fast to the palings and left to themselves till service is over. At nine o'clock numerous groups of neatly-dressed boys and girls collect at the doors of the Sunday-schools, and at half-past ten crowds of worshippers, such as you seldom indeed witness in England, press on towards the places of worship. My friends agreed in thinking that the feeling in favour of the day of rest being better observed was gaining ground everywhere, and that a great change in this respect had taken place during the last few years.

As to the state of religion generally throughout the Union, instead of recording my impressions in words of

my own, I will copy some brief extracts from three recent writers who had excellent opportunities of observing, and with whom I entirely concur. "Taking each country as a whole," says Mr. Alex. Mackay,* "the religious sentiment is more extensively diffused and more active in its operations in America than in Great Britain. . . . Are proofs required of its vitality and energy? Look at the number of its churches, the extent and character of its congregations, the frequency of its religious assemblages, the fervour of its religious exercises, and the devotion of its religious community testified by their large and multifarious donations for religious purposes, both at home and abroad." "Nowhere, indeed, on the face of the earth," remarks Miss Bremer,† "has the Christian consciousness of true human freedom attained to so full a recognisation as in the United States; nowhere has it expressed so universally, and still expresses, both by word and deed, the doctrine that pure religion is the foundation and fortress of sound morality; that the true worship of God is the true love of man; that the most acceptable sacrifice which can be presented to the Father of Nations is the sight of a free, pious, and happy people, all of whom have equal rights and equal opportunity to acquire the highest human worth, the highest human happiness." Lastly, let us listen to the opinion of Lord Carlisle, as expressed in his lecture before the Mechanics' Institution and Literary Society of Leeds: "Without venturing to weigh the preponderating recommendations or deficiencies of the voluntary system, I may fairly ask, what other communities are so amply supplied with the facilities of public worship for all their members? The towns, old and young, bristle with churches; they are almost always well filled; the Sabbath, in the Eastern and Northern States at least, is scrupulously observed; and with the most unbounded freedom of conscience, and a nearly complete absence of polemical strife and bitterness, there is apparently a close unity of feeling and

* "Western World, vol. iii., p. 253.
† "Homes of the New World," vol. ii., p. 624.

practice in rendering homage to God." To these testimonies, let me add the words of Dr. Duff to the last General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland: "It is a matter of delightful assurance that there are already about 36,000 churches in the United States, or one for every 500 or 600 inhabitants, and the great bulk of these churches are in the hands of parties substantially evangelical. Christianity, according to the general belief, is an integral part of the American constitution; or, as they put it, the Bible in the English language is Americanism."

No sooner do our transatlantic friends establish a new settlement and build dwelling-houses for themselves, than they set about the erection of schools and churches; for these purposes they never grudge money, but give with a liberality which surprises strangers, and a promptitude which shows how justly they estimate the importance of moral and religious truth being diffused throughout the community. The have not only built 36,000 churches, but have at present a large body of missionaries among the Indians; and at the meetings of the various societies in New York last May, their incomes for the year were reported as follows:—

	Dollars.
American Tract Society	414,159
American Bible Society	395,000
American Board of Foreign Missions .	189,266
American Home Missionary Society . .	191,209

Besides these four great catholic societies, there are many others of less note, and also the Home and Foreign Missionary Societies specially connected with the various denominations. It is gratifying to know that their aggregate income is not only rapidly increasing, but already amounts to such a sum as reflects the highest honour on a country so young and containing a population of so miscellaneous a character.

At the commencement of a former chapter I exhibited a table containing the number of churches in the United States and their respective accommodations. It is now

necessary for me to call the attention of those who doubt the possibility of voluntary contributions providing for the spiritual wants of the community to the very remarkable result of the American census returns of 1850 compared with those of the British census for 1851. They are as follows:—

In England there is a place of worship for every 545 inhabitants. In Scotland there is a place of worship for every 850 inhabitants. In the United States there is a place of worship for every 644 inhabitants. In England the proportion of population to church sittings is as 1 to 1·8; in Scotland as 1 to 1·5; in the United States as 1 to 1·6;* so that America, a comparatively new country, including vast regions in the west, sparsely settled and but semi-civilized, actually stands on a par, so far as chapel accommodations are concerned, with a land whose Christianity dates from the sixth century, where the Church is established by law and fostered by regal power. It is not for me, on the present occasion, to enter upon polemical controversies or to advocate any particular theory, but a regard for truth requires me to call attention to this result of an experiment likely to prove of such incalculable importance in the future history of the world. Not only in the eastern States but in the Mississippian valley, even in the far distant west, the spontaneous liberality of Christians has provided ample church accommodation for the population, notwithstanding the unprecedented ratio of its increase. Chicago, in 1853, for 60,662 inhabitants, had sixty-one places of worship, though a great number of French and Germans, indifferent to religion, reside there; and St. Paul, the capital of Minnesota, situated 2070 miles from the mouth of the Mississippi and near the geographical centre of the North American continent, has

* The population of England in 1851 was 16,921,888; the number of churches 30,990; the number of sittings 9,345,138. The population of Scotland in the same year was 2,888,742; the number of churches 3395; the number of sittings 1,834,805. The population of the United States in 1850 was 23,191,918; the number of churches 36,011; the number of sittings 13,849,896.

already six churches for a population of about 5000. An enlightened British public will not be slow to draw their own conclusions from facts so wonderful as these. They need no argument to follow them up, but must carry conviction to every candid mind. There is another aspect of the voluntary principle, as it works in America, to which I feel it to be my duty to allude—viz., the absence of bitterness in religious controversy and the friendly feeling existing between evangelical Protestant denominations. There is no jealousy of each other's rank, no sense of superiority or the opposite; but all meet on a footing of equality, all preach the same doctrine, except the few decreasing Puseyites, all actively support and manage the common schools, and sometimes, in a little town, you find the Sabbath-schools of Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Independents united and taught in the same building. The entire and complete separation of Church and State, by removing a never ceasing cause of disagreement, goes far to mitigate the *odium theologicum*, and renders Christianity less likely to repel the philosopher and the scoffer. "This separation between religion and politics," says Sir Charles Lyell,* "is certainly one of the healthy features of the working of the American institutions." Not that fanaticism and miguided zeal do not, on the other side of the Atlantic, as on this, occasionally inflame the passions of men, but that, to use the expressive words of Mr. Mackay,† "Sect is not there the envenomed and embittered thing which it is in this country." The ecclesiastical arrangements of Great Britain, to some extent, force both churchmen and dissenters to enter the arena of political strife, and Parliament becomes every now and then the scene of unseemly religious wrangling, which benefits no one, but strengthens the hands of the infidel. Our transatlantic friends, in forming their system of government, wisely avoided this

* "Second Visit to the United States," vol. i., p. 179.

† "Western World," vol. iii., p. 278.

union; and they assert that many Church and State men among ourselves, whose conservative feelings and early associations attach them to an institution venerable from its antiquity and historically famous, had they to frame a constitution anew, would follow the example set them on the Western Continent; and, in proof of this, they point to our colonies, to Australia and Canada, where the various denominations are regarded as on a footing of equality by the common law. How far this reasoning may be correct, it is not for me to judge. My part is performed when, without partisanship or colouring, I submit it to public consideration. Let it not, however, be supposed that the Americans do not occasionally, AS A PEOPLE, acknowledge the government of the Most High. For nearly a century now they have been acting on the voluntary principle; but the extreme views entertained on this subject by a section of British Dissenters have received as yet from them no response. Their legislative councils are opened with prayer by clergymen specially appointed for that purpose; their Navy List contains chaplains as well as commanders; and the governors of the various States proclaim, in the name of the civil authorities, the general fasts. The old Puritan custom of setting apart, towards the end of the year, a day of thanksgiving for national mercies, has lately extended over the whole Union. Each commonwealth chooses the day most convenient for its citizens, and the chief magistrate, in his official capacity, announces it to the people. I can testify that in New York it was as strictly observed as the Sabbath in any Scottish town, every shop being closed, business quite suspended, and the churches exceedingly well filled. The evening of the day is generally devoted to family parties and re-unions of friends. All this appears to me pleasing and proper; and, while showing that a nation can be Christian without a Church establishment, it may also teach men of ultra opinions amongst ourselves, that the best principles may be rendered inopera-

tive and repulsive when carried to an unnecessary extreme and stated in terms which do not recommend themselves to the good sense of the community.

I cannot close these observations on the religious state of America without referring to the progress and prospects of Roman Catholicism in the Western Hemisphere. There is no subject which lately has occupied more of public attention on the other side of the Atlantic than the pretensions of the Papacy. I was surprised to find it the staple topic, not only in religious circles, but in railroad cars and steam-boats, in the valley of the Mississippi as well as on the eastern slope of the Alleghanies. Not that the people of the United States concern themselves about the particular doctrines of that church or use any exciting measures to inflame the public mind in opposition to them; but some of the bearings of the system on political liberty have not failed to attract the attention of a nation so shrewd and so jealous of their constitutional privileges. First and foremost, the pernicious influence of Irishmen and Irish votes throughout the Union, but especially in New York, where the priests often control the elections, is regarded with a feeling of deep and increasing dislike by the great body of the inhabitants.* Whilst I was in America in the autumn of 1853, popular opinion, on more than one occasion, manifested itself in a most unmistakeable manner against the agents of Popery; as for example, when they, in conjunction with German infidels, tried to change the Sabbath laws in St. Louis, Missouri; when they attempted to put a stop to open-air preaching in New York; when the police in Cincinnati arrested some foreign exiles for hooting Cardinal Bedini; and when Archbishop Hughes asked a share of the common school fund that the Roman Catholics might establish seminaries of their own. These demonstrations were so

* The Know-Nothing movement is the result of this feeling. Its wonderful success, however temporary it may prove, shows the overwhelming power of Protestantism in America, when occasion calls for its exercise.

overwhelming that the questions in dispute will not likely again disturb the national tranquillity. In all parts of the country I heard complaints of foreign prelates interfering in the domestic affairs of the nation; of priests exercising an unconstitutional power over ignorant voters; and of American bishops connecting themselves with the persecuting tyrants of Europe. It struck me that the feeling against the papacy was nearly as strong in the United States last year as it was in England during the passing of the "Ecclesiastical Titles Bill."

The Church of Rome has adopted a wise policy on the North American continent. Instead of wasting time and money in a vain conflict with Protestantism on the Atlantic seaboard, where the principles of the Pilgrim Fathers have thoroughly imbued the population, and where it would be necessary to enter the lists with the ablest champions of the Reformed faith, she has turned her attention to the Western country, to the prairies of Illinois, the meadows along the Missouri, and the wheatlands of Wisconsin and Iowa—erected seminaries on spots likely to become centres of influence, sent Sisters of Charity to alleviate the physical woes of the pioneers, and fortified herself at various points in a region which her sagacity had indicated as the future seat of dominion and power. The French settlements in Louisiana and Canada West afforded a nucleus for these missions to the growing territories of the Great Republic; and eager to avail themselves of the opening thus presented, the emissaries of Rome, besides occupying the Mississippian valley, have pushed on their outposts beyond the limits of civilization, where the Kansas and Platte roll down to swell the Missouri, and the St. Peters bisects the hunting grounds of the wild Sioux. But neither zeal nor good policy can obtain for Roman Catholicism a permanent ascendency in any part of the United States. It is at variance with the institutions of the country; it is alien to the sentiments of the community, and consequently, although increasing NUMERICALLY, owing to the vast immigration from Europe, it

has for some time been RELATIVELY on the decrease, the third generation usually going over without reservation to Protestantism. Most men with whom I conversed on the subject, attributed this defalcation mainly to the influence of the education given to the children of Irish and other Catholic parents at the common schools. The American Union does not offer a kindred soil in which to plant the papal tree. The people are too well educated, too intelligent, too much attached to the cause of civil and religious freedom, to submit their consciences to priestly government or observe superstitious rites. Political liberty and ecclesiastical despotism cannot well co-exist for any lengthened period. One or other, by the force of antagonism, sooner or later gives way. The leaders of the Romish Church in America are not only aware of this state of things, but are straining every nerve to prevent the European adherents of their Church emigrating to a country where their faith is undermined by a well-organized system of common schools. Archbishop Hughes, moreover, finds it no easy matter to keep his own people in order. Last year a congregation in Buffalo refused to allow their church property to be conveyed to the prelates, and Cardinal Bedini threatened them with excommunication in consequence, but the number of their sympathizers throughout the country rendered caution necessary on the part of those who had every wish to be severe. Sir Charles Lyell* believes that "Romanism will undergo many salutary modifications under the influence of American institutions." This is not the popular impression in the United States. Some there are who take that view of the question; others believe in the eventual success of a Church which has shown such foresight and perseverance; but the great body of the people look upon Roman Catholicism as an institution doomed to crumble away and disappear with the creed of the Indians in the pathless forest. Contact with American institutions, they hold, must always act upon it as the rays of a summer sun on a

* "Second Visit to the United States," vol. ii., p. 292.

block of ice; and for it to aid in developing the resources of the west, according to them, is only to assist in digging its own quiet grave. I have heard grandchildren of Irish Roman Catholics speaking of the final triumph of Popery in America as no more likely than the sudden disappearance of the sun. Formerly it asserted almost undisputed dominion over that continent from the mouth of the St. Lawrence to the halls of Montezuma, and southward beyond the regions where the Incas reared their lofty throne; but during the present century one country after another has fallen into the hands of Anglo-Saxon Protestants, and the day appears to many not far distant when the United States will become the scene of their most signal and important victory.

CHAPTER XV.

The Common School System—Its nature, operation, and results—Character of the teaching—Educational Statistics—Colleges—New York Free Academy—Influence of the system on the religious state of the country. Parties opposed to it—Its effect on the political action of the nation, and on the prosperity of the Church of Rome.

THE foregoing remarks may enable my readers to form some idea of the state of religion in the American Union. I now purpose giving a brief outline of that rapidly extending and highly popular system of common school education which the people regard as the foundation and security of constitutional liberty; as indispensable to the well-working, not to say the existence of republican government, as the safety-valve of democracy and the necessary accompaniment of social and political equality; a system indeed without which the country could not keep its position among the nations. Every intelligent man with whom I conversed on the other side of the Atlantic, so far from doubting its efficiency, spoke of it as the stone on which the entire superstructure of American institutions rests, to remove which would be to dissolve the

Union, and sow broadcast over the land the seeds of anarchy and crime. General instruction we find to be a fundamental element in the compact which binds together the citizens of every state. In New England the constitution of each commonwealth contains some such provision as the following: "A general diffusion of the advantages of education being essential to the preservation of the rights and liberties of the people; to promote this important object, the legislature are authorized, and it shall be their duty to require the several towns to make suitable provision at their own expense for the support and maintenance of public schools." Again, in constitutions adopted since the accumulation of a school fund, the following or equivalent language is employed: "The fund, called the school fund, shall remain a perpetual fund, the interest of which shall be inviolably appropriated to the support of the common schools throughout the state." Or, to quote from the recently formed constitution of a comparatively new and sparsely populated state: "The legislature shall provide by law for the establishment of district schools, which shall be free and without charge for tuition to all between the ages of four, and twenty years, and no sectarian instruction shall be allowed therein. Each town and city shall be required to raise by tax annually for the support of common schools therein, a sum not less than one half the amount received by such town or city respectively for school purposes from the income of the school fund." These extracts will serve to show that the people of the United States attach so much importance to the common school system of education, and to the practical recognition of the principle, that it is the duty of the State to instruct the young; that they do not leave their legislatures to initiate taxes for this purpose, but provide for them in their primary capacity as represented in the constitutions of their several commonwealths. Education forms part of the original covenant no less than protection to life, liberty, and property. The law in the State of Massachusetts, to take an illus-

tration which may enable us more clearly to understand the nature of this institution, directs that every city or township, as the case may be, shall furnish school accommodation for all the children resident within its bounds, the legislature having the power of enforcing obedience to this rule. The expenses are defrayed by a tax levied on every inhabitant of the district. All matters connected with these seminaries,—the appointment, removal and payment of teachers, the erection of buildings, the adoption of regulations, &c., are managed by a committee of gentlemen elected generally by the people, having a chairman, secretary, and a code of rules. This larger committee is divided into sub-committees, for the better performance of the work. Each member takes charge of a particular school, which he is expected to visit once a month; and all the members are bound to visit the whole of the schools in their district at least twice in the course of the year. Half-yearly examinations are held by the committee for the purpose of advancing such scholars as they may find qualified to a higher school. It is usual to carry forward in this manner entire classes; although all pupils found deficient are kept back. The first description of schools are called "primary;" into them children can obtain admittance at four years of age. These are all taught by ladies, and it is delightful to witness not only how well the little scholars behave, but how intelligently they answer difficult questions. The "intermediate" schools compose the second class. They are intended to prepare for the grammar schools those who from sickness, inattention on the part of parents, and other causes, have not had an opportunity of attending the primary seminaries. At seven years of age, pupils, provided their progress has been satisfactory, can enter the "grammar" schools and remain there, the boys till they are fourteen, the girls till they reach their sixteenth year. These schools have a master, an usher, and a female assistant. Those who make a creditable appearance during their curriculum, are advanced, if they choose, to the "high" school, where they are taught

all those branches which fit a young man for college. This complete education, it must be borne in mind, is given to all without any charge, the expenses being defrayed by the people taxing themselves voluntarily for that purpose. The amount of school funds throughout the Union now amounts to no less a sum than 25,669,096 dollars, or upwards of £5,000,000 sterling. Massachusetts in 1852 raised by taxation for the support of the schools 910,216 dollars, or £180,000 sterling; during the same year 2,249,814 dollars were expended for school purposes in the State of New York; and Rhode Island, with a population of only 150,000, spent nearly 100,000 dollars in 1850 for educating its youth. In 1852 the amount paid by the western State of Ohio for schools was 309,472 dollars, and Indiana has already laid up on behalf of public instruction a sum amounting to more than 1,000,000 sterling. The city of Boston alone appropriates yearly about 330,000 dollars for the common schools, and has invested 1,500,000 dollars in school-houses; so that every man, woman, and child in that town contributes two dollars per annum at least to prevent the population growing up in ignorance. In addition to the amount received from the school fund or raised by state tax, the towns and school districts almost invariably TAX THEMSELVES annually for the support of the common schools, thus voluntarily adding to the compulsory tax; and it should also be kept in view that the amount paid by districts for the erection of new school-houses is not generally included in these returns. In 1852, 862,507 children attended the common schools in the State of New York; 492,679 in the State of Pennsylvania; in the State of Vermont 90,110; in the State of New Jersey 152,040; and in Massachusetts 199,183 out of 202,880 children between the ages of five and fifteen. These five States were the first that met my eye when going over the Returns; and greatly to my own surprise, on dividing their aggregate population by the number of scholars, I found the wonderful result of one in four, or one scholar for every four people. I am quite aware

that this proportion is greater than that which obtains throughout the Union as a whole, owing principally to the absence of an educational system in the south-western states; but a careful investigation of the subject will, I think, satisfy the reader, as it certainly has satisfied me, that there are more children in proportion to the population attending school in the United States of America than in any other country under the sun. As to the quality of the instruction given at these seminaries, Sir Charles Lyell remarks:* "The High Schools of Boston, supported by the State, are now so well managed that some of my friends who would have grudged no expense to engage for their sons the best instructors, send their boys to them as superior to any of the private establishments supported by the rich at great cost." I find in my journal for 1846 an entry regarding the common schools of Philadelphia corroborative of this remark, and expressed nearly in the same terms. It was my endeavour during my successive journeys and residence in the cities to make myself master of this great educational system; and by visiting the various kinds of seminaries, by hearing the classes examined, by conversing with the teachers, the members of the committees and the general public, to arrive at a correct conclusion regarding its efficiency. I have besides, with no small amount of labour, gone over a huge pile of documents on this subject sent to me from the other side of the Atlantic, and collated the information which they contain. They elaborately discuss details which it would be unsuitable for me to refer to here. So occupied was my mind for some days with the lighting, temperature, and ventilation of school-rooms, the classification of pupils, the courses of study, the regulations of seminaries and the rules of committees, that I nearly forgot that such matters, however important in themselves, were not likely to prove interesting to the general reader. There are only two among those points which struck me most forcibly whilst perusing these papers which I take the opportunity of

*. "Second Visit to the United States," vol. i., p. 195.

stating: first, the universally expressed opinion in favour of large schools to contain from 400 to 600 or 700 pupils; and secondly, the plain and faithful terms in which the examinators draw up their reports, and animadvert on what appears to them worthy of censure. No stranger visiting these seminaries can, I think, fail to be highly gratified with the character of the instruction given, the greatest pains being taken to explain the tasks, and to make each pupil understand what he learns. The main object of the teachers seems to be, not so much to fill the minds of the scholars with knowledge as to stimulate their mental powers, to train them to habits of reflection, to put them in the way of instructing themselves, and to fit them in early life to exercise in a rational manner the rights to which as American citizens they are entitled by the constitution of their country.

Having entered upon the study of this question without prejudice and with an anxious desire to arrive at the truth, having personally visited many of the schools, and conferred with leading men of all political and polemical opinions in the Union as to their working, you will not think me obtrusive when I say that I have formed an opinion, and that that opinion is altogether favourable. And how could it be otherwise when every man I met, Whig, Democrat, and Free Soiler, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, and Methodist, farmer, politician, and merchant, high and low, rich and poor, native and emigrant, pointed to the common school system as the foundation of the nation's greatness, and assured me that, however susceptible of improvement, it was the one powerful influence which preserved the territorial integrity of the greatest federal republic the world has ever seen. "A country of whose people," remarks Mr. Mackay,* "it may be said that they all read." What an honourable character! Do those who merit it not deserve to succeed in founding an empire which shall

* "Western World," vol. iii., p. 238.

rival that of our sea-girt Britain, and be more famous in history than imperial Rome.

However difficult or impossible it may be to establish such a system in Great Britain, where the rights of existing institutions and the prejudices of education have hitherto prevented unanimity of sentiment or action, ought we not heartily to enter into the spirit of the transatlantic children's song:

"Then blessings on our Common Schools,
Wherever they may stand;
They are the people's colleges—
The bulwarks of the land,
'Tis a happy theme; like a golden dream its memory seems to be,
And I'll sing while I have voice or tongue, 'The Common School for me.'"

The employment of female teachers in the American schools has been frequently objected to by European writers. I do not profess myself competent to argue this question, but certainly Miss Bremer is correct when she says * that "they are considered by the people as more skilful than men in the training of early youth."† They receive salaries varying from 300 to 500 dollars per annum. I was surprised to find that the masters of the Latin and English High Schools in Boston get each 2400 dollars a year, or only 100 dollars less than the Governor of the State. This will show how highly the Americans appreciate the importance of the teacher's office. The general intelligence of the population cannot but be apparent to every one who travels through the United States with his eyes and ears open. In six months 60,000 copies of Macaulay's History of England were sold in the Union, and one firm in one year disposed of nearly 3,000,000 of volumes. There are now 694 public libraries in the country containing 2,201,623 volumes, and Sir Charles Lyell mentions that he was quite astonished at the interest in his geological researches displayed by the inhabitants along his line of route. I have already referred to the theological seminaries.

* "Homes of the New World," vol. ii., p. 166.
† See also "America as I found it," p. 42.

There are besides 16 schools of Law, 37 of Medicine, and no fewer than 119 Universities, with 11,590 matriculated students. Even the territory of Minnesota, of which I suppose few among us ever heard, has already appropriated two thirty-sixths of the entire lands for public free schools, and donated 49,000 acres to endow a college. St. Paul, its capital, had last year four seminaries of learning. One of the most remarkable institutions in America is the Free Academy, a spacious erection situated at the corner of Lexington Avenue, and Twenty-third street, New York. It has an executive committee of six gentlemen, appointed by the General Board of Education, fourteen professors, eight tutors, and at present 435 scholars, the great majority of whom, though children of poor parents, are thus enabled to obtain a college education altogether free of charge. The Academy was established in 1848 pursuant to an Act of the State Legislature, passed May 7th, 1847, "for the purpose of providing higher education for such pupils of the common schools as may avail themselves of its advantages." Five years constitute the term of study, and no boy is admitted unless he passes a strict examination. On looking over the entry book I found that a great many had been rejected. The principal, Dr. Webster, was kind enough to take me over the school, and I was much pleased with its arrangements and the proficiency of the pupils. Five hundred and fifty-nine boys have already been educated at this college—an institution which crowns the noble edifice of national education.*

* Since writing the above, I have been several times asked the question whether a system which worked well in America might not be unsuitable to the requirements and circumstances of Britain. As to this, my readers must form their own opinion. They can do so without hearing mine, and I should be stepping out of my province were I, whilst describing and defending the Common Schools of the United States, to obtrude my sentiments in regard to the educational necessities of England. It certainly does not follow that a plan desirable in one country must needs be desirable in another; but the advocates of the sectarian and of the voluntary systems may find arguments enough, without attempting to bring into disrepute institutions which reflect the highest honour on our transatlantic friends, and have been the salvation of their republic.

It has frequently been alleged in this country that the common schools of America have an irreligious tendency, that they have been found in practice to exercise an influence prejudicial to Christianity, and that in consequence a large body of wise and good men on the other side of the Atlantic have withdrawn from them their countenance and support. To ascertain the truth of these assertions was the strongest of the many motives which induced me last year to visit the Great Republic. Sincerely desirous of arriving at the truth with regard to statements which had been made with so much confidence, and propagated far and wide over Scotland, I spared no trouble to discover whether or not they had a good foundation: I conversed on the subject with at least two hundred persons of various opinions on political and polemical questions, commercial men, farmers, philanthropists, and ministers of the Gospel; I started the topic at quite a number of parties attended by those interested in the great religious movements of the age; I took every opportunity of finding out the sentiments not only of casual fellow-passengers, but of individuals prominently identified with the leading evangelical churches, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, and Independent, and so far from meeting in any part of the Union a single person opposed to the common school system of education, I did not meet half a dozen who knew that this institution had met with opposition except from the Roman Catholics. Of these, one was a very intelligent medical man in Ohio, who, after listening to my interrogatories, laughed heartily, and remarked, "So you have heard of the 'hard heads;' you are far ahead of the people of the United States, very few of whom would believe you, were you to tell them that such a party had an existence." Another was a farmer, in Connecticut, who, when I had with great difficulty made him comprehend the nature of my queries, starting suddenly from his seat, exclaimed, "Well, I guess you're right, there must be, somewhere or other, folks of this sort, for a long time ago, when I was a boy, I heard an old Presby-

terian minister say that the public schools were latitudinarian." A third was the Hon. Luther Bradish, a man highly respected in the benevolent and religious circles of New York, and than whom no person in America understands more thoroughly the working of the educational system. His unhesitating and emphatic testimony was, that the boys educated at the common schools go out into life quite as well disposed towards evangelical religion as those brought up at the strictest sectarian seminaries. He, in common with every other leading man with whom I conversed, deprecated in the strongest possible terms the establishment of denominational schools, as calculated to render the youth narrow-minded and exclusive, as opposed to the institutions of the country and as preventing that admixture of classes and opinions which exercises such a controlling influence in favour of law, order, and sound Protestantism. The Roman Catholics oppose the national schools, nominally because a version of the Bible is read in them of which they disapprove, and because so many of the school books favour the principles of the Reformation, but really because they undermine their Church polity, and are the most efficient instruments hitherto tried for destroying the power of priestcraft and the papacy. So well does the religious public in America know the value of the education offered by the various States, that Sabbath-school teachers in the large seaport cities actually visit the dwellings of the poor and the newly-arrived emigrants, and while endeavouring to bring their children under spiritual influences, urge, at the same time, their being sent in the first instance to the common schools. Reading of the Scriptures forms part of the exercises in almost all these seminaries; the school books are and must ever be Christian and evangelical in a community where such sentiments are in the ascendant; in some rooms I observed texts painted above the windows and on the doors, and in the first primary school which I ever visited, the little children chanted the Lord's Prayer in a manner as affecting as it was

beautiful. All interested in the subject united in assuring me, that the zeal of the different denominations had proved quite able to secure the religious instruction of youth, and that ample provision had been made to secure this end wherever the common school system prevailed. I visited one Sabbath school in Philadelphia, connected with an Episcopalian church, and containing no fewer than 850 children, who raise every year £150 for missions. It was a sight which made the cathedrals of Europe appear insignificant; a more sublime manifestation of Christianity than all the pomp and pageantry of Roman festivals. I felt more deeply impressed in that assembly than when the Pope was blessing thousands of prostrate worshippers in the Basilic of St. Peter's. I believe there is no country in the world where the youth are more carefully taught the precepts of Scripture than the United States. Every means is used by the Christian sects to provide for the diffusion of religious principles amongst the rising generation, and, judging from the present, as compared with the past state of the nation in this respect, in no country have they been more successful. While objecting to all oral or written commentary on the Bible in the common schools, as calculated to destroy the nationality of the plan, and to remove from the influences of education the very children who stand most in need of it, they do not for a moment lose sight of religious truth as an all-important element in the instruction of the young, but, without ostentation or a show of publicity, they have done rather more in providing it than many communities which claim for themselves, in this respect, a very doubtful pre-eminence. The creeds of the people of the United States, and of the religious public there, seem to be very much the same on this question, and may be summed up in the following articles:—

1st. That a general diffusion of education is essential to the success of republican institutions.

2nd. That it is the duty of the State governments to insist on provision being made for it.

3rd. That all sectarian teaching must be excluded in national seminaries.

4th. That the Christian sects, if consistent and conscientious, should attend to the religious tuition of all the members of the community, both young and old.

I may safely assert that there is not a single nation in the world where there exists so much diversity of opinion on matters of public interest, on questions of government and religion, as the United States; but in regard to the above propositions, the stranger will find the most striking and perfect unanimity. Their national belief on this head may be expressed by a couplet from the pen of the immortal Cowper:—

> "All truth is precious, if not all divine,
> And what dilates the powers must needs refine."

It always makes me smile when I think of the incredulity and astonishment depicted on the countenances of those Americans to whom I told that many good people in Scotland devoutly believe in the existence of an influential Protestant party in the United States opposed to the common schools. It is my impression that scarcely one in twenty gave me credit for truthfulness. They do not think it possible that the peculiar views of a mere handful of Old School Presbyterians, repudiated by an overwhelming majority of their own denomination, and nearly unknown to the general public, should be so unduly magnified as to have any weight whatever on this side of the Atlantic. But there *is* a powerful and active party in the Union who are straining every nerve to destroy the common schools, and who will welcome with pleasure any subsidiary effort on the part of conscientious Protestants,—a party well organized, disciplined, and anxious to incite division amongst those whose only safety lies in their presenting an unbroken phalanx to the assailing foe,—a party as unscrupulous in assertion as in the means used to accomplish an end, with able generals and energetic officers pledged to subvert, in America, the principles of the Reformation, and to enlist the most rising of nations in the service of the

Pope of Rome. For several years this party has been marshalling its forces and surveying the ground, and now that the plan of the campaign has been agreed on, and the orders received from the chiefs in the Vatican, the first outwork of liberty and Protestantism which has been assailed is the common schools. They are the bulwarks of the territory to be invaded, the strong and strengthening defences of religious freedom, the very Thermopylæ of the Protestant faith. Think you, my readers, that our transatlantic brethren do not know when they occupy a vantage ground—when they can fight on behalf of their liberties from the munitions of rocks, when, in the conflict with the Church of Rome, they can wield a weapon—knowledge—which, like the head of Medusa, paralyses and prostrates its power? On the contrary, education becomes every year more and more their study; they improve, but do not radically alter; they modify that they may consolidate and render impregnable to the foe; the foundations of the system lie deep in the hearts of an enlightened people; the superstructure draws largely on their money, talents, and time, but, so far from doubting its usefulness, they look on it as the stronghold of their greatness, a fortress against which priests and potentates may expend their ammunition in vain. The hope of America lies, not in legislative enactment, not in penal statutes directed against those who plot for the destruction of her civil and ecclesiastical freedom, but in the general dissemination of knowledge among the people, which guarantees the national well-being, confounds the projects of foreign schemers, and has been found, in practice, fatal to the prosperity of the Church of Rome.

CHAPTER XVI.

American slavery—My object in discussing the subject—Misapprehensions regarding it current in Great Britain—Importance to the advocates of liberty of correct information—Difficulties and prejudices which beset the planters—Dread of a war of races—Depressing effect of the Institution on the Southern States—Its degrading influence on the whites—Society in the south.

Slavery has, long ago, become a word so hateful to British ears, that I feel it no easy matter to call your attention to its present development and future influence in America, in such a manner as will recommend my statements to a candid judgment, and, at the same time, leave no impression unfavourable to the great cause of universal freedom. It is necessary that we enter upon the consideration of this subject with unprejudiced minds, without rancour or thoughtless enthusiasm, desirous of arriving at just conclusions, whatever may be our preconceived notions or the prevalent popular feeling of the hour. It would be a comparatively simply task for me to address my readers on behalf of suffering humanity, to excite their sympathies towards the poor black man who cuts the sugar-cane in the Mississippian swamps, or toils in the rice fields of the Carolinas; I might, by description, by denunciation, by appeal, fill their breasts with the deepest emotion, call into exercise the noblest affections of their nature, and secure their heartiest applause; but this is neither my intention nor my province; and fortunately the people of England now require no eloquence to stimulate their zeal in the cause of negro emancipation. The spirit which animated Clarkson and Wilberforce was not entombed when these moral heroes slept with their fathers, when the jubilee song of liberty died away among the mountains of Jamaica and the tropical jungles of Berbice; it lives in every free-born British heart, and has an echo wherever commerce or Christianity has carried the knowledge of our name. Nor shall I be expected to

enter the lists in support of the planters, and for the sake of opposition defend a system, the evils of which must be apparent to us all. It may be chivalrous to fight the battles of those, who, having a weak position and few champions, endure unmerited obloquy as well as just reproach; but my earnest desire is to avoid partisanship whilst making a few observations on a theme so difficult to handle with that candour and fairness which, to REFLECTING minds, render the remarks of the traveller worthy of attention.

If there be one subject more than another connected with America, concerning which misapprehension exists in Great Britain, that subject is negro slavery. It is quite common, in the best informed circles, to hear statements made which show an utter ignorance of its history, working, and political bearings. Forgetting that it was an inheritance handed down by the government of England, that it was forced on the colonists by the mother country at a time when no one thought of armed resistance to imperial laws, we sometimes blame our transatlantic friends for its institution, no less than for its continuance; losing sight of the limits beyond which the Congress meeting at Washington has no legislative power, we charge the Republic in general with permitting an evil, which, in reality, is beyond the interference or control of the central government. How many, too, amongst us talk, as if federalism had no existence in the Western hemisphere, as if the distinction between the North and the South were a mere fiction, as if there were no difficulties in the way of at once setting free three and a half millions of uneducated men, as if the simple *ipse dixit* of a planter were, in all cases, sufficient to emancipate his negroes; as if no allowance should be made for persons who could not follow the dictates of humanity without throwing their families destitute upon society, and giving up to strangers the homes where their childhood had been spent. If Englishmen wish effectually to promote the cause of liberty, they must first make themselves masters of the

case as it stands. Americans cannot be expected to listen to advice based on misconception, and to follow counsellors led away by prejudice or clamour. It is not unusual for Europeans to get fairly worsted in an argument on this *questio vexata*, not on account either of the weakness of their position or the deficiency of their reasoning powers, but simply because they spoke without having a thorough knowledge of the matter under discussion, and ventured random assertions which their adversaries found it easy to refute. We may be right in our conclusion, but if we start from false premises, and introduce inapplicable illustrations, we shall promote, not our own views, but those of our opponents, by entering the arena of controversy. Better leave the good cause alone than weaken it by bad logic, or statements which cannot be proved strictly accurate.

So much has, of late years, been written in regard to the system of African bondage existing in the Southern States of the American Union, that it would be a work of supererogation on my part were I to do more than throw out a few hints which may tend to render our opinions more defensible, and our efforts more practically useful.

Without then entering upon the subject *ab initio*, or detaining my readers by any remarks of a historical or ethnological nature, I invite their attention to slavery as it at present obtains in those independent commonwealths connected with the Federal Republic of North America, and lying to the south of the fortieth parallel of latitude. With the laws which regulate it in these separate States the general legislature has nothing whatever to do; for them the local authorities are alone responsible, and not to the senators assembling at Washington, but to those who meet at Richmond, Columbia, Frankfort, Nashville, Baton Rouge, and Montgomery, must we look for their alteration or repeal. New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and the other northern republics which abolished slavery within their respective jurisdictions,

are no more chargeable with its continuance in Louisiana or Arkansas, than they are with the social condition of the Russian serf or the bondman of central Africa. The indiscriminate and sweeping censures too often pronounced on this side of the Atlantic against the whole body of the American people, besides exasperating those who might otherwise assist us in removing the fetters of the negro, weaken by their injustice the effect of our opinion on those whom we wish to convince. The duties of Congress are very different from those of the British Parliament;* nor must we draw too close an analogy between the circumstances of the southern planters and those of the British proprietors in the West India islands prior to the act of emancipation. The latter were a mere handful, of little importance, and having little influence in comparison with the great body of the nation; the former constitute the majority of the whites, and exercise paramount sway in the commonwealths wherein they reside. The latter received as a compensation for their losses millions of pounds sterling, which a rich and generous nation could afford; the former, of course, can expect no such payment, but would have to part altogether with a great portion of their possessions, whilst the value of the other portion would be very doubtful,—dependent, in fact, on events, the course of which no living person can foresee. In the swamps of Alabama, Louisiana, Georgia, and the Carolinas, the white man could not safely labour; and who that has attended to the state of things of late years in Jamaica will GUARANTEE the willingness of the blacks to cultivate in these regions the rice plant and the sugar cane? It is easy for us to say to the owners of such soil, "Emancipate your slaves;" but recollect it is a question, they think, of subsistence, rather than of property with them; and we, knowing the frailty of human nature, and conscious of our own short-comings in matters where self-interest is concerned, should be cautious how we speak of persons

* Slavery was abolished sometime ago in the district of Columbia, governed by the Federal Congress.

who from infancy have been taught to regard slavery as a blessing, whose whole fortune is bound up in it, and who conscientiously, though, as we think, most erroneously, see no alternative but to continue this species of servitude, or allow the country to become a desert, and their children to be reduced to beggary. Nor is it difficult for the planter, when he goes north or travels in other countries where there are free negroes, to persuade himself that his serfs enjoy many more physical advantages than individuals of the same race who are their own masters. Observing the latter almost everywhere looked down upon, degraded, and poor, outcasts from polite society, Ishmaelites against whom all hands are raised, he "lays the flattering unction to his soul" that the former have been born under better influences, and should, instead of murmuring, be grateful for their lot. But a more important consideration here presents itself. Suppose the blacks at once emancipated; what will they do? Where will they go? What will become of them? How long will they remain at amity with their former owners? Will they amalgamate with the Anglo-Saxons, the Creoles, and the Spaniards? Will they quietly work for wages in jungles so lately vocal with the driver's lash? These are questions by no means easy of solution, but they force themselves on the consideration of all who contemplate legislation on the subject, however overlooked by us. Providence alone can unravel the mysterious web, and evoke light out of the present gloom; but can we wonder if many men interested in the system look upon manumission as a prelude to a war of races,—a short, decisive, bloody war, which will end as such contests have always done, in the triumph of the European over the African, and the expulsion of the latter from the continent of North America? This, to my mind, appears not an impossible, though a very unlikely termination of the present excitement; and, however benevolent men may hope and pray for a different result, they cannot reasonably slight the opinion of so many on the other side of the Atlantic, that unless

some unforeseen event materially alter their relative numbers, the whites and blacks will not live long together on a footing of equality, and that the era of emancipation will also be the era of destruction to the negro.

On the other hand, we must keep prominently in view the depressing effect of slavery on the material prosperity of the States where it prevails. In the north all is energy, activity, and enterprise; in the south a painful torpor seems to have taken possession of the people. Houses ill-built and going to ruin, fences out of repair, railroads few in number and badly managed, impassable roads, dear travelling, dirty inns, estates producing less and less every year, population scarcely increasing, in some places even on the decline, all testify to the moral blight hanging over the country. Nor will climate alone account for this, for the Yankee flourishes in Georgia as well as Maine, in New Orleans no less than in Boston; wherever an improvement may be seen in the south, a northern man may also be found as its author and manager; and even the planters themselves acknowledge that works of internal advantage are not progressing with them as in the more flourishing commonwealths dependent on free labour. Then compare the dull, deserted-looking cities of the slave states with those bustling, handsome towns, which are every year rising into greater importance in the north. Mobile is only a mean and straggling village. Its houses, public buildings, churches, and shops, reminded me of those in the remote parts of Norway and Sweden; its principal square resembles an English cowpen, and altogether it looks like a place back-going and unprosperous. Charleston itself will not for a moment bear to be contrasted with third-rate towns on the Ohio, the Hudson, and the Lakes. The majority of its houses are still wooden; at night the lamps are so few and the holes in the thoroughfares so deep, that a stranger finds it dangerous to walk abroad; there is not a single handsome street; many villages in the free states have better shops; the public buildings are quite unworthy of notice, and I saw only

one stone church. Governor Morris, in the Federal Convention at the close of the Revolutionary War, said, that "slavery was a nefarious institution—the curse of heaven on the States where it prevailed." "Compare the free regions of the middle States," he continued, "where a rich and noble cultivation marks the prosperity and happiness of the people, with the misery and poverty which overspread the barren wastes of Virginia and Maryland, and the other states having slaves. Travel through the whole continent, and you behold the prospect continually, varying with the appearance and disappearance of slavery."* If these remarks were true at the close of the last century, they are much more true at the present day, the free states having long ago far distanced those in the south in everything that constitutes material prosperity. They may have the same climate and a similar soil, they may be separated only by a belt of forest, a narrow river, or a fancied line; but the first flourish in a degree unexampled in the history of nations, while the last with difficulty can hold good their own! North Carolina, indeed, may be said to be positively retrograding; and Maryland compared with Pennsylvania, is an unreclaimed wilderness. Every ten years the census returns show most conclusively the fatal effects of slavery on the industrial progress of those provinces where it prevails. Men, yet alive, remember Ohio a mere territory, inhabited by a few enterprising settlers fond of adventure and a life in the woods. At that time Virginia was the acknowledged head of the Union; but now times are so far changed that the new free state in the west contains 550,000 more inhabitants than the "Old Dominion," once pre-eminent in point both of numbers and of wealth. We may follow out this course of observation, and invariably find the same result. Trace the Ohio from Pittsburg to its junction with the parent stream;—on the right bank are manufactories, villages, vineyards, farms, and cities, increasing wonderfully in size; on the left bank stand the ancient

* Hildreth's "History of the United States," vol. iii., p. 511.

denizens of the forest, relieved only by plots of tobacco ground or small plantations of Indian corn. The free states are making gigantic strides towards wealth, population, and power; the slave states are struggling with an incubus which precludes advancement, and threatens revolution. On the one hand, we behold thriving towns, handsome churches, well-filled schools, intelligent energetic men and women, the steam-engine, the workshop, and the telegraph; on the other, one of the plagues of Egypt seems to have visited the settlements, and filled them with desolation and ruin. The very literature of Europe and the north is scarce on the blighted side of this line of demarcation. The planters discourage a multitude of books, lest some of them should contain matter inimical to their domestic institutions, and subversive of the principles which they have sworn to defend.

If such be the effect of slavery on industry and social progress, it exercises an influence not a whit less pernicious on the men themselves. If it degrades the black man, far more does it degrade and brutalize the white, rendering him haughty, indolent, and dependent, overbearing in his deportment, and altogether devoid of that moral energy which distinguishes the New Englander, and is founding a mighty nation in the north-west. New Orleans, Mobile, indeed all the places of consequence in the south, contain an unusual number of cafés, bar-rooms, drinking-shops, pistol-galleries, low theatres, bowling-alleys, and such like resorts, which are filled all day long with a set of loafing, good-for-nothing, dissipated fellows, generally half intoxicated, who use in every sentence oaths too horrible to repeat, and scoff at morality and religion. The stranger coming from the north will be surprised with the rowdyism, swearing, and drunkenness prevalent in every village under the influence of slavery. The hotels, steamers, stages, railroad cars, and coffee-houses, swarm with specimens of humanity so sunk in the social scale, so utterly lost to every good influence, so ignorant, brutish, and depraved,

that, notwithstanding their lofty pretensions and white skins, you put them down at once as both mentally and morally inferior to the negroes. Even amongst well-living men the general profanity and laxity of principle strikes an observant traveller; while the frequent murders, drunken quarrels, outrages on persons and property, the spectacle of legislative halls turned into pugilistic arenas, of the people by their free votes refusing to adopt an educational system, of states repudiating just debts, the disregard of social ties and the too common licentiousness of manners,—all bear witness to the virulence of that moral gangrene which is eating into the very vitals of the commonwealths. "What I cannot shut my eyes to," says Lord Carlisle,* "is that while slavery continues it must operate with terrible reaction on the dominant class, to blunt the moral sense, to sap domestic virtue, to degrade independent industry, to check the onward march of enterprise, to sow the seeds of suspicion, alarm, and vengeance, in both internal and external intercourse, to distract the national councils, to threaten the permanence of the Union, and to leave a brand, a byeword, and a jest upon the name of freedom." How comes it to pass that the miscreants who infest the lower Mississippi, the gamblers and thieves who travel in the steamers on the Red River and the Alabama, the unpunished criminals who lurk for their prey in Texas and Arkansas, do not frequent the free states of the north? Why is human life so much less regarded in Louisiana than in Ohio? Why can desperadoes defy the law in Tennessee, while in Michigan they dare not follow their vocation? Why is the bowie-knife more worn in Mobile than in Buffalo? Why are the churches and schoolhouses so empty, and the jails so full between the thirty-eighth degree of latitude and the Gulf of Mexico? Why, unless in the words of Miss Bremer,† "the natural sense of right and the pure glance of youth are falsified by the institution of slavery." Ah

* Lecture at Leeds.

† "Homes of the New World," vol. ii., p. 233.

yes, many southern mothers know well that its influence acts like a poison in the minds of their children, rendering them quick to resent, obstinate and intractable, violent in temper, and insolent in speech. It educates a nation of petty tyrants, regardless of private decency, and having no sympathy with the sufferings of their fellow-men.

But here it is necessary to explain that the persons whom one meets on the street, on board steamers, and in bar-rooms, and whose conduct so often leads strangers to believe the worst of manners in the south, must not be taken as fair specimens of white society in the regions where they congregate. Many travellers have been led to form erroneous ideas of the planters by judging of them entirely from the men who frequent public places, unaware of the fact that the wealthier and more refined inhabitants do not throng the thoroughfares, but lead a quiet inactive life in their country houses, removed from the bustle and turmoil of hotels and railroads. The great body of landed proprietors differ as much from the rough repulsive characters floating along the stream of travel, as does the polished merchant of Boston from the backwoodsman of St. Paul. You see Southerners in a very disadvantageous light, and through a very distorted medium in the cotton boats of the Alabama, and on the levees of Vicksburg and Baton Rouge. The better class of white men in these states are to be seen only on their plantations; and in order to form any opinion in regard to them, the European must leave the highways and spend his time in their retired but comfortable homes.

CHAPTER XVII.

Subject continued—Condition of the slaves as domestic servants, on the cotton fields, and on the sugar plantations—Arbitrary powers given to masters—Cruelties and crimes practised by some of them—Feelings of the Negroes—The runaways—Denial of education to the slaves—Whipping posts—Internal slave-trade—Separation of families—Slave traders and kidnappers—Laws against emancipation—Erroneous notions in Europe in this respect—Slaveholders by compulsion—Blinding force of education and habit in relation to the institution—Can a slave-holder, under any circumstances, be a Christian?

We have glanced, in the last chapter, at the circumstances of the master; let us now briefly consider the lot of the slave. That there are many men far too good and too wise to avail themselves of the unjust power with which law invests them; that the majority indeed exercise their authority in a lenient and merciful manner, that hundreds of owners feel deeply for the position of their bondmen, and to alleviate their sufferings CONSTANTLY AND HABITUALLY VIOLATE EXPRESS ENACTMENTS, that manliness, kindness of heart, and generosity in numerous instances, render the terrors of the system more nominal than real, that thousands of free labourers in other countries enjoy far fewer of the good things of this life than most Africans in the southern States; that the treatment of the negroes is, generally speaking, humane, may be proven, it appears to me, by indubitable testimony—by the statistics of their remarkable increase, and by the circumstance of their well-known longevity. Those employed as domestic servants in nine cases out of ten live well, enjoy luxuries unknown to the English peasant, and die at a good old age. Attached to their proprietors, from their infancy brought up in his household, allowed many little indulgences, and regarded in certain respects as members of the family; individuals amongst them have over and over again refused to receive their freedom when it

was within their reach. It is pre-eminently so in Virginia, Maryland, and Kentucky;* where few of the slaves, comparatively speaking, are employed in the cultivation of the soil; and even in other districts, where they work almost exclusively in the fields, it would be unfair to represent their owners as with few exceptions, cruel and exacting. But what SHALL we, what CAN we, say in favour of the condition of the negroes on many of the large cotton plantations; where, under the fierce rays of an almost tropical sun, poorly clad, and as poorly fed, they are compelled to work like oxen, and are driven in gangs like felons? It makes me shudder to think of the severe toil and the heartless oppression which these wretched beings undergo to support a white aristocracy, and supply with the raw material the manufactories of Manchester. Whatever may be said regarding the treatment of the slaves in other branches of industry, they are most brutally used in the culture of cotton. Then, again, in the sugar houses, it is said, I believe with justice, that the present mode of grinding and boiling necessitates the overworking of the negroes to such a degree, that they die in eight or ten years, and that were it not for immigration, they would soon become extinct. From personal observation I can testify that it is worse than the severest labour in European prison-houses, and renders our fellow-creatures more like monkeys than men. May those of my fellow-countrymen, who have keen and sensitive feelings, never be doomed to see the worn out, haggard, emaciated, tottering, bent and deformed African, cutting down the sugar-cane, or bearing it to the mill. The sight would unnerve many of them, though they heard not, as I

* We learned at Washington that it is by no means rare for the well-fed and clothed bondman, who is there in attendance on his southern master, to despise the coloured freeman, who is poorly clothed and fed in comparison to him, and leads a laborious life. The pampered valet, however, is no true specimen of what the negro on the tobacco, cotton, or rice plantation is, even although we leave out of the comparison all that refers to morality and volition.—"America as I found it." p. 225.

have done, the clank of the runaway's heavy chains, or the sharp quick sound of the driver's lash.

Nor must we forget, whilst alluding to these hardships, the shameful power given in most of the States, to the master, to punish and chastise at pleasure. Seldom indeed is he called to account for any atrocity of this kind, unless the sufferer die during its infliction, and in some districts positive statutes protect him in the exercise of this monstrous authority. Judge Stroud not only states this in so many words, but adds, "the master may with entire impunity, in at least two States, use the horse-whip and cow-skin as instruments for beating his slave, he may load him with irons, or subject him to perpetual imprisonment; and for cruelly scalding, wilfully cutting out the tongue, putting out an eye, or any other dismemberment, if proved, in South Carolina, a fine of one hundred pounds currency only is incurred."* I am afraid that there are not a few men, especially in the south-west, and by the banks of that dreadful Red River, who answer to the description of Legree, and whose fists have in very deed and truth, been "calloused with knocking down niggers."† Be this as it may, he would be a bold man who ventured to deny that planters in America do now and then murder their negroes, that black testimony is not admitted in courts of justice, however dreadful the outrage perpetrated, and that even where whites have witnessed the crime, once and again the manslayer has been acquitted by a jury of his fellows. Now, to my mind, it matters not whether such cases are frequent or the reverse, whether the majority of masters conduct themselves humanely, or use with brutality the methods of torture within their reach—the system which permits such atrocities, the laws which shield the guilty from the punishment due to his sins, will not for a moment bear justification, and must sooner or later be swept away in the providence of God. It has been said that

* Stroud's "Sketch." p. 43.
† "Uncle Tom's Cabin," chap. xlv.

the great proportion of the negroes are contented and happy. But people differ not a little in what constitutes happiness. Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton used to relate a conversation which took place at his own table in connexion with this question, which much amused him. A gentleman who had been resident in the Mauritius, one day dining with him, laboured to set him right as to the condition of the slaves. He finished by appealing to his wife,—"Now, my dear, you saw Mr. F——'s slaves, do tell Mr. Buxton how happy they looked." "Well, yes," innocently replied the lady, "they were very happy, I'm sure—only I used to think it so odd to see the black cooks chained to the fireplace."* That many poor Africans have become so degraded as not to realize the nature of their position, or to feel that

> "Freedom has a thousand charms to show
> That slaves, howe'er contented, never know,"

is very true; but it is equally true that, in the great majority of instances where liberty has been offered them as the reward of certain labour, they have worked with an energy unknown to hopeless bondmen, and that not one in twenty who have escaped, has, after years of poverty and unremitted toil, regretted that he gained his liberty. Ah, no! the love of it is far too deeply-seated in the human breast to be quenched, except in rare instances, even by ignorance and hereditary oppression. People tell me the slaves are contented—I answer, then, what kind of creatures are "negro dogs," packs of which are advertised in the southern newspapers for hunting and catching runaways? These notices, we need not attempt to conceal it, tell a dreadful tale, a tale of poor old scarred and tortured Africans flying from the whip of the driver to lie out in swamps which the serpent shares with the alligator, where the rattlesnake dwells with the toad. Half mud, half water, jungles of rank, tangled grass, or thickets interwoven with

* "Life," by Charles Buxton, Esq., p. 184.

the poisonous vine, their air impregnated with the most deadly miasma, their moss and morasses scarcely affording standing-room for his torn and bleeding feet, they are, nevertheless, the only strongholds to which the black man, driven to distraction, can in his despair and agony flee; and even there he is not safe, for without he hears the bay of the bloodhounds, and within starvation, like some frightful spectre, rustles among the sedges, and stalks across the treacherous fen.

Before leaving this, the gloomy side of the question, I must glance at one or two evils connected with the system, which require serious consideration.

And, first, it is unlawful in most of the States to educate the slaves. No doubt these statutes are constantly evaded, and southerners will tell you that they were passed rather to prevent the abolitionists inciting the negroes to rebellion than to interfere with the praiseworthy exertions of the planters themselves to elevate the condition of their bondmen. This, I believe to be, to a certain extent, true; for every one knows that there are many enlightened and worthy men in Georgia and the Carolinas, and that the legislators, in numerous respects, are better than their enactments, too humane to act up to the letter of a code, which, like that of Draco, might have been written in characters of blood; but, admitting at once the cause and the exceptions, we still have the appalling reality before us, that thousands of men and women in America are doomed to hopeless ignorance on account of the colour of their skin. I have listened with astonishment to Christians defending a state of things so passing strange, and refusing to admit the obligation of teaching all human beings without distinction, at least to read the word of God. The fact is, they cannot help regarding universal education as a step towards manumission, the ghost of which so frightens them as to blunt their perception of duty, and weaken their reasoning powers.

Then, I blush to mention it, there exist, in some cities of the south, institutions belonging to the munici-

palities, for flogging slaves, and on hundreds of estates every year young women and old men are stripped naked, tied to stakes on the ground, and whipped in the presence of their fellows, ay, and strangers can, in New Orleans, go in and witness these indecent and inhuman exhibitions, as freely as to a reading-room or a playhouse.

I speak with reluctance of the internal slave-trade, of the traffic going on between Virginia, Kentucky, and the breeding-states on the one hand, and, on the other, the more recently-settled territories in the south. The annexation of Arkansas, and the union with Texas, have given an impulse to the rearing of negroes which renders the prospects of emancipation more distant than ever. The most frequent sign in some towns is, "Slaves sold here." I have seen them arranged in rows like bottles of blacking, or vases in the corridor of a museum. My readers have heard too often of the slave auctions to require more than a reference to them here. To be present at one of them will prove more convincing than whole volumes of abolitionist argument. The most dreadful circumstance connected with them is the *habitual separation of families*. I use these terms advisedly, for, although it is very well known that MANY who avail themselves of such marts, will neither buy nor sell husbands away from their wives, or parents from their children, it is just as well known that if ALL acted on this principle the business could not be conducted, that the majority attach no more importance to it than we do to the disposal of a litter of puppies, and that advertisements appear every day in the southern papers which place the question beyond the possibility of a doubt. That kind planters have, time and again, retained negroes whom they could scarcely feed rather than break up the domestic circle; that the humane frequently bid at the auctions solely out of motives of benevolence every one admits, but to say that the separation of families is an exception to the rule, is to make an assertion which every trader in the country would laugh to scorn.

I have sometimes been surprised at the inconsistency of the more respectable planters and their friends in regard to this class of men, the Tom Lokers and Theophilus Freemans,

> "Who drive a loathsome traffic; guage and span,
> And buy the muscles and the bones of man."

They denounce their conduct and practices, refuse to receive them into society, take credit to themselves for keeping them at arm's length, and yet, when occasion requires it, avail themselves of the facilities which their pens and auction-rooms supply. I heard a very intelligent Episcopalian clergyman refer with exultation to the fact of these negro merchants being looked down upon, as if it were any mark of right feeling or principle to denounce a man for the business he conducts, whilst at the same time you frequent his store.

One more circumstance remains to be noticed before passing on to another part of the subject, viz., that every year a number of free blacks are kidnapped and hurried off to work in bondage beyond the Red River and the Colorado. Occasionally a victim of this kind escapes, and, to do the southerners justice, kidnappers have, in a few instances, been punished; but the great majority of the unfortunates thus forcibly abducted, being unable to write, and removed from all means of communication with their friends, pine away and die in hopeless slavery.

Having thus fearlessly exposed the evils of the system, I feel myself more at liberty as fearlessly to plead for the exercise of Christian forbearance towards many in the south, who, as I shall presently show you, are slaveholders by compulsion rather than by desire, who in a manner are forced by the laws of the various commonwealths to stand in the relation of owners to their fellow-men, and who are often spoken of in this country with a severity as injudicious as it is undeserved. There is a class of people in philanthropic Britain who carry on a kind of Quixotic crusade against everything which savours of injustice. Without taking the trouble

to study a subject in all its bearings, they feel a most praiseworthy horror at narrations sometimes fabulous, and condemn with emphasis and indignation before hearing evidence and weighing testimony. Such well-meaning folks do sometimes more harm than good, and no cause have they more effectually injured than the cause of the suffering negro. Of the thousands amongst us who express themselves in language so strong and denunciatory against the whole race of planters, and who maintain that under all possible circumstances, slaveholding is a heinous sin, how many know that a proprietor in MOST of the southern states can no more free his bondmen by an act of his own, than he can change the colour of their skin? The law of Georgia provides that "each and every slave or slaves in whose behalf a will or testament of manumission shall have been made shall be liable to be arrested by warrant, and being thereof convicted, (observe that the good deed of the master is treated as a transgression on the part of the slave,) shall be liable to be sold as a slave or slaves by public outcry, for the benefit of the commonwealth."* The General Assembly† of North Carolina has enacted that all slaves emancipated unlawfully are to be committed to the county jail, and at the next court held for that county are to be sold to the highest bidder. In Mississippi not only must the legislature sanction every individual case of manumission, but it must be proven that the slave has performed some signally meritorious action on behalf either of his master or of the state. It is therefore not so much the fault as the misfortune of many planters that they hold slaves, and to those amongst them who deplore the institution, whose moral worth and religious zeal are apparent to all, who devote time and money to the instruction of their negroes, and who neither treat nor consider them as slaves, shall we refuse our sympathy, dare we refuse the communion of our churches? I go a step further, and being in my

* "Stroud's Sketch," p. 149.

† *i. e.* The Senate and House of Representatives.

conscience persuaded that some good men have been so blinded by the prejudices of education, of association, and of habit, as not to see the force of the arguments against slavery, I would treat these men as brethren and fellow-Christians, no matter how mistaken on this particular theme. I know very well that this is an unpopular doctrine on this side of the Atlantic, but whatever may be thought of MY sentiments, surely no fault will be found with those of Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, and she in the thirteenth chapter of the "Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin," writes: "In some slave states it seems as if there were very little that the benevolent owner could do which should permanently benefit his slave, unless he should seek to alter the laws." Are we then at liberty to vituperate and to excommunicate those who, to use the expressive words of Mr. Mackay,* "have been placed in so painful, so perplexing, so frightful a position," and who, instead of allowing their slaves to be sold to other and more cruel masters, are pursuing the very course pointed out by the eminent lady just named. On this subject the General Assembly of the New School Presbyterian Church declared in 1846 as follows:—"In view of all the embarrassments and obstacles in the way of emancipation interposed by the statutes of the slaveholding States, and by the social influence affecting the views and conduct of those involved in it, we cannot pronounce a judgment of general and promiscuous condemnation, implying *that* destitution of Christian principle and feeling which should exclude from the table of the Lord all who stand in the legal relation of masters to slaves, or justify us in withholding our ecclesiastical and Christian fellowship from them." This carefully worded deliverance may not please the ultras of either party; to my mind it is excellent logic and good commonsense. "Many southern women," says Mrs. Stowe† (and the testimony is not a whit less true of many

* "Western World," vol. ii., p. 141.
† "Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin," chap. iii.

southern men)—"many southern women, surrounded by circumstances over which they can have no control, perplexed by domestic cares, loaded down by duties and responsibilities which wear upon the very springs of life, still go on bravely and patiently from day to day, doing all they can to alleviate what they cannot prevent, and, as far as the sphere of their own immediate power extends, rescuing those who are dependent upon them from the evils of the system." Why, so far from slave-holding being in all cases a *malum per se*, were the religious proprietors IN THOSE STATES WHICH DO NOT ALLOW EMANCIPATION to refuse any longer to hold their negroes, the country would become a Sodom, without one redeeming influence to save it from the judgments of heaven. If these things be true—and they have not been hazarded without most careful investigation—candid men amongst us will see how very dangerous it is to speak *ex cathedrâ* before mastering the facts of the case, and how utterly untenable is the position that a slave-holder under no possible circumstances can be a Christian.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Subject continued—Intemperance and violence displayed by the abolition Societies in the north—Their political mistakes, and assaults on Christianity—Short-sighted policy of Southern legislation—Signs of progress—Change of feeling among the better class of planters—Influence of Home Missionary Societies, and New England school-teachers in sapping the foundations of slavery—Probable effect of the contest on the prospects of the Union—the Missouri compromise, and the Fugitive Slave-law—Renewal of the struggle—Slavery doomed.

HAVING thus far expressed myself plainly, I shall not shrink from adding that the course pursued by the party technically styled Abolitionists* has been most intemperate and unwise, that a great deal of the violence displayed on this question at the south is owing to the fanatical doings at the north, and that dictation, menace,

* Or ultra-abolitionists, for there are many excellent men usually so called to whom the following remarks by no means apply.

and abuse only delay the day of freedom for the suffering African. I did not meet above a dozen or twenty persons in America who entertained a different opinion from that now expressed, and negroes themselves have complained to me of the extraordinary manner in which so many of their friends carried on the agitation. The great majority of religious people in the free States are of course opposed to slavery, but a mere handful of them retain their connexion with a party which employs denunciation instead of argument, whose measures only serve to exasperate the planters, and who in many of their gatherings not only admit, but loudly cheer the bitterest attacks on Christianity. In September last year, a meeting of this extreme section was held in New York, and addressed by Mr. Lloyd Garrison and other persons, including several women, in terms which I read at the time with a feeling of shame bordering on incredulity, and many of which I would not, for the sake of public decency, commit to paper. Blasphemy would be a mild word by which to characterize some of the sentiments applauded, and any reasonable person who read the speeches without the newspaper heading, might have supposed that their object was to further the cause of infidelity, not of negro emancipation. The same thing exactly occurred at the annual May gathering of this extreme section in 1846, and, as I made it a point to peruse the report of all such assemblies held throughout the country, and for years have been in the habit of reading the American newspapers, I feel not the smallest hesitation in saying that the tactics and language of the so-called Abolitionists repel men of religious principle and ordinary discretion. Hawthorne* speaks of them as "brandishing their one idea like an iron flail."† And

* "Mosses from an Old Manse," p. 167.

† The felicity of this expression as applied to the ultra-abolitionists of America, and their decreasing sympathisers in Great Britain, has been amusingly illustrated by their criticisms on my opinions, after their delivery on a former occasion. I was accused of favouring slavery, of writing a general vindication of slave-holders, of being lenient to the priestly champions of this deplorable institution, of magnifying the

certainly they seem on many occasions to make law, order, and revelation bend to their furor on behalf of immediate emancipation. So far from it being wonderful that a movement in itself so benevolent does not command the support of the Christian Church, it is wonderful that any men who revere their Bible can listen to the Parkers and the Garrisons by whom it has hitherto been led.

"I must confess," remarks Mr. Ruxton,* "that Abolitionism in the United States appears to me to be anything but genuine and honest." This expresses precisely the feeling of most Englishmen after they have observed for a month or two the proceedings of the party, and found out that their result,—viz., the closing of the South against anti-slavery doctrines, and the neutrality professed by the great body of the people at the north. Their political actions have likewise been a series of mistakes. By supporting Polk for the Presidential chair, *i.e.*, by starting a candidate of their own who prevented the election of Henry Clay, they paved the way for the annexation of Texas and the vast increase of slave territory, and men in whose veracity I could rely, —men unconnected with either Whigs or Democrats,—

difficulties in the way of its fall, and of other crimes too dreadful in seriousness to mention. My *real* offence was in disparaging the efforts of societies in the Northern States, whose proceedings and the declarations of whose leaders have caused the secession from them of thousands who might now have been waging a successful campaign against the hateful system of human bondage The men of "one idea" tolerate no difference of opinion even on minor points, and since some leading members of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society have refused to act in conjunction with the American agitators, they have become more illiberal and abusive than ever. According to some people the world must be retrograding, when it does not advance precisely in the way chosen by them; but philanthropists as well as monarchs have tried a despotic course before now in vain. An enlightened public may in times of excitement overstep the boundaries of prudence, and say and do harsh things, but in the end calm reflection has in this country always prevailed. As long as men value the right of private judgment they will not for any length of time permit themselves to be dragged at the chariot wheels of hot-headed declaimers, or wield weapons which, in their calmer moments, they feel to be unsafe.

* "Adventures in Mexico and the Rocky Mountains," p. 318.

told me last year that the Free Soilers are more corrupt than either, frequently selling their influence to the highest bidder. But apart from the mode in which they conduct the warfare, it may reasonably be doubted whether *immediate* emancipation is practicable. Mr. Mackay, an able opponent of negro slavery, says it is "a chimera,"* and I sometimes think many who loudly call for it would do well to ponder the words of Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton:† "If the breast be uneducated, the gift may curse the giver; and he who passes at once from the slave to the freeman may pass as rapidly from the freeman to the ruffian." At all events, whether or not this view of the matter be correct, it is at least deserving of respectful consideration, and men who urge it while they do not conceal their dislike of African bondage, are much more likely to promote the good cause than societies who welcome Lucy Stone and applaud the diatribes of William Lloyd Garrison.

But whilst condemning at once the precipitancy and the intemperance of the abolitionists, we must not shut our eyes to the want of judgment and foresight, not to say the guilt of those who, with the privilege of legislation committed to them, have taken no step whatever towards abolishing a system of dire injustice. The charge against the south is, that for nearly a century nothing has been done to remove a national reproach, and to settle a question which every year becomes more and more difficult of solution. The planters are supreme rulers; if they cannot individually emancipate their negroes, they can collectively alter the laws which retain them in perpetual bondage; and until some move be made in this direction, we cannot help feeling distrust in their protestations of anxiety to be rid of the evil. No plea of violence on the part of the north, or of obstacles at home, will avail them, as long as, instead of relaxing, they increase the severity of their slave code,

* "Western World," vol. ii., p. 108.
† "Rienzi," chap. x.

and strive to perpetuate an institution condemned by the universal voice of mankind.

Judging from the surface of things, looking only on their external aspect, one might suppose that no progress was making on this subject in any of the southern States; but a more intimate acquaintance with the country will enable the stranger to observe signs of a change for the better, which escape the notice of the mere passer-by. If he sojourn for any time in Kentucky he will learn that the system of slavery is losing hold, that several practical farmers of enterprise have introduced free labour, and proved incontestably its advantage in such a climate over that of bondmen; that on several plantations the negroes have been set free, this being permitted by the law of the State, provided the proprietor send them out of its jurisdiction; that, in short, the people are fast finding out that, in order to prosper like their neighbours in Illinois and Ohio, they must remove the incubus which bears them down in the race of social improvement. The same may be said of both Maryland and Virginia, in a corner of which latter State a New England colony has strikingly demonstrated the superiority of free labour; and who that knows anything of Georgia is not aware of the silent but sure progress of anti-slavery views on the banks of the Ockmulgee and the Savannah? To teach the slaves habits of industry and application, to assist them in acquiring a competence, to give them a suitable education, and instruct them in the great doctrines of our most holy faith, is the earnest endeavour of many who make no loud professions, and yet do more to aid a noble cause than a whole host of northern declaimers. The LEGISLATION of that State gives one a very erroneous idea of its PRACTICE; and if ever a great movement on behalf of manumission take place in the territories more immediately interested in the question, it will in all human probability originate in the plantations of Georgia. Then, again, the influence of New England

men and women scattered over the slave states is beginning to tell. As merchants and school-teachers, prudently and without ostentation, they act as leaven to the mass of society, circulating widely, in a manner which attracts little attention, opinions directly at variance with African slavery. I observed a marked change in the attitude assumed by southerners on this subject in seven years. Few of them now refuse to discuss it with persons disposed to be reasonable; it is no longer tabooed either by newspaper editors or legislators; there are not many districts where proprietors in favour of gradual emancipation may not be found; the instruction of the negroes goes on, in an underhand way of course, but still with increasing diligence; and some speak of the institution as a necessary evil who formerly loudly proclaimed it a national blessing. The traveller will also be surprised to hear a great deal about the gracious purposes of God in permitting slavery to continue for a time in America, in order that the blacks may be civilized, taught agricultural and commercial arts, and converted to the Christian religion, before going over *en masse* to cultivate and evangelize Africa. It is a striking sign of the times when you hear this statement made by men who, ten years ago, would have treated it with ridicule and scorn. As for the arguments from the Bible, brought forward by advocates of the system, I should like to know how many really believe them. Were some unlooked-for convulsion to bring down the price of cotton, the reverend gentlemen who have so diligently laboured to persuade mankind of their cogency would soon find out new methods of interpretation.

But notwithstanding all that has been said to the contrary, especially by the extreme abolitionists, my hope for the gradual removal of slavery centres in the influence of the Christian faith. The declarations of certain southern divines and the tracts of northern clubs may lead us to a different conclusion; but I believe, ere many years, it will be found that the Bible

and the missionaries have sapped the foundation of the system, and paved the way for its final overthrow. The Reports of the Home Missionary Society, supported by the Congregationalists and the New School Presbyterians, afford abundant testimony of this; and to the former religious denomination, judging from recent movements, it is not unlikely that the honour may be reserved of undermining, by scriptural instruction, the citadel which has so long withstood the more open assaults of the politician and the declaimer. Miss Bremer met a southern bishop, who expressed himself as follows:*—"Already is Christianity labouring to elevate the negro population, and from year to year their condition improves, both spiritually and physically; they will soon be our equals as regards morals, and when they become our equals, they can no longer be our slaves. The next step will be for them to receive wages as servants: and I know several persons who are already treating their slaves as such." Many of you have heard of the negro songs, of their dances to the banjo, and of their noisy merrymakings in the magnolia and palmetto groves; but such rejoicings pertained to a state of society past away; now you hear, instead, the striking language of the coloured preacher, the murmur of domestic prayer, and the loud swell of voices joining in an anthem of Christian praise.

The influence of slavery on the future prospects of America it is not easy to predict. Mr. Prescott tells us† that Cardinal Ximenes, in the fifteenth century, earnestly opposed its introduction into Hispaniola, as certain, "from the character of the race, to result in a servile war;" and modern statesmen of all parties seem alike puzzled how to rid the Union of an evil, every day increasing in magnitude and threatening to break up the entire territorial arrangements of North America. The battle must be fought, too, not only in Louisiana and the Carolinas, but in those half-explored regions

* "Homes of the New World," vol. i., p. 328.

† "History of Ferdinand and Isabella," vol. iii., p. 388.

which stretch away from the Mississippi to the base of the Rocky Mountains, not only in Nebraska and Kansas, but on either side of the Bravo Del Norte, and in the wilder plains where the Blackfoot Indians now hunt the buffalo and the elk. If the slave States do not extend and increase in number, their prestige will pass away, and their policy at present seems to be to grasp so much territory, that the north can never outvote them either in the House of Representatives or the Senate. This conflict, however, cannot last for ever; as long as new lands remain to be annexed, the evil day may be delayed, and our friends on the other side of the Atlantic may see their bark of empire triumphantly progressing on the stream of time; but an unexpected emergency may check its career of victory, and cause a mutiny amongst its numerous crew: as Longfellow says,*

> "There is a poor, blind Sampson in this land,
> Shorn of his strength, and bound in bonds of steel,
> Who may, in some grim revel, raise his hand,
> And shake the pillars of the commonweal,
> Till the vast temple of our liberties
> A shapeless mass of wreck and rubbish lies."

There are many men in America who believe the Union has elasticity enough to survive the shock, and that its stability will not be seriously endangered by the final decision of the question; there are others who as confidently expect the struggle to end in a great social convulsion and the establishment of at least two separate republics in the western hemisphere. It would be idle in me to speculate on such a contingency; I would only express a fervent hope that the time may soon arrive when, in the words of Fenimore Cooper,† "these fair regions will exist without a single image of the Creator that is held in a state which disqualifies him to judge of that Creator's goodness."

> "Let good men ne'er of truth despair
> Though humble efforts fail,
> And give not o'er until once more
> The righteous cause prevail;

* "The Warning Stanza," iii.
† "The Spy," chap. xiii.

In vain and long enduring wrong
The weak may strive against the strong,
But the day shall yet appear
When the might with the right and the truth shall be,
And come what there may to stand in the way,
That day the world shall see."

Many of my readers are no doubt aware that some years ago a compromise was effected between the north and the south, by which the former, in consideration of a resolution pledging the United States to annex no more slave territory, agreed to pass the fugitive slave law. This enactment rendered it compulsory on the part of the free states to deliver up runaways, who may have taken refuge within their jurisdiction, and to aid the marshals of the general government in restoring them to their masters. This bill, I was credibly informed, has had an extraordinary effect in rousing the feelings of the people in all parts of the country, and calling their attention to the evils of the system. An excellent man settled in Ohio told me that hundreds of persons whom he knew had been made anti-slavery men by it, and every one knows the manner in which the law has been set at nought by judges, magistrates, and citizens, in various parts of the Union. Near Bellefontaine three negroes who had fled from bondage in Kentucky were decoyed into the house of their owner's brother by his son, who had recognised them in a railroad-car, and wished to keep them until constables arrived to apprehend them; but his intention being discovered, fifteen hundred men turned out to the rescue, got possession of their persons, and concealed them three weeks, at the end of which period the officers were wearied searching for them. This is no solitary instance; such cases happened so frequently that the legislature at Washington began to think they had overshot the mark, and even men, who, in their public capacity, had voted for the bill, when appealed to as private individuals on behalf of victims flying from oppression, themselves assisted to render its provisions null and void. Some statesmen imagined that this statute had for ever settled the dispute between

the belligerent parties, and its authors were, in certain quarters, styled the saviours of their country; but, alas for human foresight, all has already been undone! Shades of Henry Clay and Daniel Webster! what think ye now of your southern friends, who, after pledging their party to ask no more slave territory, last session voted in a body and carried the Nebraska Bill, in direct violation of a compact of which they were the proposers, and which they solemnly swore to defend? This recent measure has once more renewed the war; the planters have thrown down the gauntlet, and, from appearances in the north, it will be taken up in a manner which may shake the social fabric to its very centre. They may sing pæans over a temporary success, and put their trust in insignificant politicians, like Stephen A. Douglas, who have ambition without principle, and forwardness without sterling ability; but, unless they can shut out the literature of the civilized world and stay the progress of mankind, they need not persevere in a contest which, as sure as sunset in the western heavens, will result in the emancipation of the negro.

"Let Mammon hold while Mammon can,
The bones and blood of living man;
Let tyrants scorn while tyrants dare,
The shrieks and writhings of despair;
An end will come—it will not wait,
Bonds, yokes and scourges have their date,
Slavery itself must pass away,
And be a tale of yesterday."*

* Montgomery.

CHAPTER XIX.

My voyage to Cuba—Approach to the Queen of the Antilles—Appearance of Havana—Moonlight on the Plaza das Armas—Roads in Cuba—Scenery and vegetation—Visit to a sugar plantation—The process of grinding and boiling—Condition of the negroes—Severity of their labour—Possibility of obtaining their liberty—Effects of slavery on the whites—State of religion in the island—The Priesthood—Character of the Creole—Remarks on the political condition of Cuba—Its connexion with Spain, and almost certain annexation to the American Union.

WHILE in the western hemisphere last year I paid a visit to the island of Cuba. It was a clear, frosty day in December when the steamship "Black Warrior" left New York; scarcely had we passed Sandy Hook before we encountered a wintry ocean; and, as the vessel approached Cape Hatteras, the gale increased to a hurricane, snapping our gaff as if it had been a lucifer-match, carrying away the main-foresail, and sending sea after sea into the cabin. Three days afterwards we were ploughing our way among the weeds of the Gulf-stream, the thermometer seventy degrees in the shade, and the passengers all on deck watching the breakers on the Bahama reefs, and the low, sandy Bemini group of islands. Nothing can be finer than the approach to the "Queen of the Antilles," with her steep wooded shores, and striking range of rugged inland mountains, but, I must confess, a slight feeling of disappointment with the situation of the Moro Castle and the general appearance of Havana. The ground does not rise sufficiently to make the prospect imposing, and the want of church spires, and the lowness of the houses, certainly detract from the coup-d'œil of the city. The dwellings reminded me of those in Turkey, being, for the most part, only one story high, and fantastically painted; while the streets are just wide enough to admit of the national conveyance yclept "volante," which I can compare to nothing but a kind of insect known here under the name of "daddy long-

legs." The scene on landing, the squabbling boatmen, the peculiar cries, the offensive smells, and tatterdemalion officials forcibly recalled to my recollection the shores of the Mediterranean; and the evening music and promenade on the Plaza das Armas made me think of the Alameda in Cadiz. The palaces and gardens, the senors and senoras, were not different from those that I had seen before; but how can I describe the delicious feeling of the air after sunset, the grandeur of the heavens—

> "The purple ether that embathes the moon,
> Your large round moon, more beautiful than ours;
> Your showers of stars, each hanging luminous,
> Like golden dewdrops in the Indian air?"

No words can convey the faintest idea of a Cuban road. In some places it resembles a watercourse; in others, it consists of deep ruts hidden by grass several feet high; in one spot you see no path at all, but seem to be passing over a waste of wild flowers; in another, you are glad to leave this apology for a highway, and pursue a devious course across a field of Indian corn; whilst every now and then, if in a volante, your "calashero" turns aside to skirt a plantation of sugar-canes, or force his way through a grove of bitter oranges. Once my charioteer, to my extreme astonishment, leaped his horses, vehicle and all, over a thick cactus hedge, and then descended, pellmell, into a gulley several feet deep. The scenery of this lovely island far surpassed my expectations. In the hands of an energetic race it could be made a very paradise; for the soil brings forth almost spontaneously, and food for man hangs in clusters from every other tree; its surface is pleasantly diversified with hill and dale, mountain and ravine, and harbours unexcelled invite the commerce of the world. The stately king and cocoanut palms, the plantations of bananas which constitute the chief food of the negroes, the waving sea of sugar-canes, and the forests of oranges, lying between rugged volcanic hills and the deep blue ocean, impress one forcibly with the beauty of nature and the luxuriance

of vegetation in the tropics. You miss only the grassy bank, the flowery sward, which charm the eye even in misty England, but which cannot exist under a West Indian sun.

My object in going to the country was to see the enslaved Africans, and the process of grinding and boiling sugar. I shall give a short description of the latter. On the top of an elevation commanding a fine view over fields rustling with canes, or glittering with oranges, and near the planter's abode, which is an edifice so mean and rude that it would be uninhabitable in any other climate, stands the mill where a high-pressure steam-engine, made at Birmingham, drives the great roller which crushes the cane. The bruised cane falls out at the other side, and is piled by negroes on carts drawn by oxen, to be driven to the furnaces and used as fuel. The juice drops into a vessel below, and runs off along a trough in a continuous stream to the boilers in another part of the building, where, after passing from one great copper-vessel to another, increasing heat being applied as it proceeds, it is thrown by the oversman into a cool tank and crystallized by being tossed into the air, and allowed to fall back again into the receptacle. A blundering striker may, by not hitting the right moment for this operation, by stopping the fires too soon, or letting them burn too long, spoil many boxes of the precious material. After being crystallized, it is put in metal pots and covered with clay, so as to exclude the air, and thereby give the manufacture a whiter colour. These pots have a hole in the bottom, out of which the molasses or treacle flows into troughs placed below the floor of the warehouse, to be conveyed into vats in the cellar. In Cuba the crushed cane makes better fuel than timber. In Louisiana, again, the moisture of the atmosphere renders it useless for this purpose. There are three kinds of cane—the green, the girded, and the crystalline; the planters require to keep an immense number of oxen and carts to bring in the produce from the fields and take it to market, and both last a very short

time, owing to the dreadful state of the roads. The negroes in Cuba live in miserable huts like Hottentot dwellings, and scarcely fit for the accommodation of the lower animals. Their children may be seen running stark naked within enclosures with old and ugly women tending them, as if they were pigs or hens. The ablest-bodied slaves work in the fields. Those employed indoors, at the furnaces and the mills, struck me as the most miserable, emaciated, and brutalized beings that I had ever seen, resembling, in fact, monkeys rather than men. If the Africans are badly treated in the Southern States of the American Union, they are far worse treated on this island, being compelled to labour more continuously and more severely than flesh and blood will stand. The grinding goes on night and day for six months in the year, when they work in relays, and are only allowed six hours rest for meals and sleep out of the twenty-four. On some plantations barbarous masters give them only three hours, calculating that it is cheaper to buy new importations from Africa at the end of a few years, than to save the strength of the present hands by giving them better food and mitigating their toil. They are regularly driven to their task by the whip like beasts of burden, and those who show symptoms of disaffection may be seen heavily chained. I can conceive of no more painful sight than immortal creatures so degraded, deformed, and worn out with exertion which the human frame is not fitted to endure. On the other hand, slaves in Cuba can and frequently do buy their freedom; quite a number of them possess purses of dollars which they are hoarding for that purpose; if their owner refuse to give them their liberty when the legal sum has been tendered to him, they can appeal to the syndic, who sees justice done; when emancipated they carry on commercial or agricultural business, protected by the laws of the colony, and enjoying a climate which, to the black man, is an earthly Eden. In these respects, the Southern States of America, with all their boasted enlightenment, might learn a lesson from the legislation of corrupt and despised Spain! The effect

of slavery on material progress and social advancement is the same in both countries, shutting them out from the profits of skilled labour, preventing the consequent increase of capital, and perpetuating both ignorance and crime. The same chain which binds the wretched negro fetters the white man in the great struggle for industrial development, riches, and political power.

It may, I believe, be truthfully said that there is no such thing as religion in Cuba. Sunday is not even observed as a holiday, business going on quite as usual; many large towns have only a single church, and the men never enter a place of worship except on some rare occasion, to look at the women who go there to display their pretty faces and their finery. The priests live in avowed breach of canonical laws, indulging in licentious practices without scruple, and caring very little even for the welfare of that Roman Catholicism which has made practical infidels of the entire population. With such a state of things, one need not look in any rank of life for what we call morality. The Creoles appeared to me a remarkably diminutive race, with unintelligent countenances and little physical grace. To a man they are discontented with Spanish rule, but then they have neither the energy to strike a blow for freedom, nor the ability to govern themselves were they to obtain their liberty. Fit for nothing but to drill slaves, smoke cigars, imbibe *eau sucré*, and lounge in the cafés, they will in all probability for ages continue in leading-strings to a people of more enterprise and legislative talent. Every person with whom I conversed looked forward to the time when the "Queen of the Antilles" will be annexed to the American Union. For my part, I do not think there is an alternative, Spanish dominion being certainly doomed, and no other nation having such a natural claim to the sovereignty as the United States.* It is true that the effect of this might be to prevent for a time the gradual abolition of slavery; but on the other

* Of course no well-disposed man wishes success to the hordes of freebooters from America, who have once and again attempted to revolutionize the island.

hand, the resources of the magnificent country would be developed, roads, railways, and telegraphs constructed, the trade in negroes with Africa abolished, schools established, and Protestant worship introduced with all its life-giving influences to awaken the dormant energies of mind; the soil, naturally so rich, would then bring forth abundantly for man and beast, and an island already to some extent a garden, would be made in the hands of skilful workmen to rejoice and blossom as the rose. If the Anglo-Americans were to obtain possession, they would re-create the social fabric in less than a couple of years. At present, Cuba serves as a mere milk cow to old Spain, which drains her annually of a million sterling. Notwithstanding its wonderful fertility, flour costs 3*l.* a barrel, because the people are not industrious enough to produce it, and because a senseless government has imposed an excessive duty on its importation; all offices are filled by lazy Spaniards, who come out for a few years for the express purpose of robbing, peculating, and making money by permitting in an underhand manner the oceanic traffic in negroes; no man can reside in the country unless he swears that he is a Roman Catholic; the mountains teem with runaway slaves, whom no military force has been able to subdue; only a small portion of the land is under cultivation; the traveller, for fear of robbers, must arm himself to the teeth; old plantations are running out for want of agricultural skill; scarcely any roads have yet been made; no vessel can enter Havana after sunset or before sunrise; even the inhabitants cannot move about without passports; the Creoles cherish a bitter hatred to Spanish domination; trade stagnates, and manufactures are unknown; while an active, enterprising people look upon the island with a covetous eye, wanting it as a home for their invalids, a tropical state for their Union, and a key to the navigation of the Mexican Gulf. What interest can we British have in opposing an acquisition clearly foreshadowed by nature and destiny? As commercial men, as philanthropists, as Protestants, we should

desire to see the Saxon replace the Castilian, and Cuba opened up to civilization and Christian truth. And further, we may just as well make a virtue of necessity, for apart altogether from lawless landings, if money will purchase the country, or if Spain be foolish enough to allow misunderstandings to lead to war, as sure as the rocks of the Moro are washed by the ocean, the star-spangled banner will wave from its heights.

CHAPTER XX.

Rapid growth of the United States—The Mississippian valley—Its discovery, settlement, and vast resources—The great lakes—Travelling in the White Mountains—The wooden hotels—The wilds of New Hampshire—Lake Winnipiseogee—Scenery in the New England States bordering on the Atlantic—Albany to New York—The banks of the Hudson.

Most men in this great commercial country have some acquaintance with the vast and increasing influence which our race and institutions now exercise throughout the habitable globe. They know that millions in Asia bow under British sway, that we wield an extending power in Africa, and that at the far Antipodes our colonists have laid the foundation of an empire, which at no distant day may assert an undisputed pre-eminence south of the equator. Above all, few indeed among us can be ignorant of the fact that a great republic in the west, a tree of our own right hands planting, an honour to the parent stem—is daily growing in population, wealth, and power, promising in fact to overshadow with its mighty branches the effete dynasties of the olden world.

When we hear of New York having seven hundred thousand inhabitants, of railroads and telegraphs intersecting the country in various ramifications, from the St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico, of fleets rivalling England's navies, sent to monopolize the Antarctic whale trade, to fill the docks in the Mersey, and to eclipse our

merchantmen in the eastern seas; when we see the representatives of Congress respected at every foreign court, the stars and stripes waving proudly in Mediterranean harbours, and Italian artists busily preparing expensive works designed to adorn the saloons of transatlantic mansions—we must feel deeply impressed with the rising fortunes of the United States of America.

But perhaps many of us may not have attentively studied the geographical position, the natural features, or the wonderful resources of the provinces included in that comprehensive name. We have been chiefly familiar with the great cities on the eastern coast, those districts known to cotton spinners, shipowners and dealers in produce. Let us make a clean breast of it at once, and confess that America beyond the Alleghanies is to tens of thousands of our countrymen an unknown land.

But what a small proportion do New England, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and the Carolinas bear to the almost boundless territories within the limits of the Federal Union. As Holland to Europe east of the Rhine, as Normandy to the wide plains of France, so are these States on the Atlantic seaboard to the mighty regions through which the Mississippi rolls its turbid stream.

About the middle of the sixteenth century one of Pizarro's most distinguished captains, having returned to Spain with immense wealth, and all the reputation which success confers on eminent abilities, obtained from Charles V. the government of Florida. Like Cortez, he burnt his ships before commencing his march into the interior, and he it was who, first of Europeans, near the spot where Memphis now stands, discovered the "Father of Waters." No steamers then hurried along that great highway to unexplored regions, no cotton plantations were to be seen among the denizens of the forest; senates, representatives, and state houses were unknown, even the log hut had no existence, nor had the hunter's rifle disturbed the gaily painted birds, —all was solemnity, stillness, desolation, excepting

when a red man's paddle scared the wild fowl, or an Indian war-whoop awakened the echoes of the woods. The captain, who expected to find another mine of Potosi, to open up countries more auriferous than Peru, fell a victim to disappointment and fatigue. Near the point where the Red River mingles its current with the parent stream, some say under its bed, in the silence of night, for fear of avaricious foes, were buried the mortal remains of Ferdinand de Soto. How few, amongst the busy thousands who now pass the spot, think of him whose daring first revealed the existence of the Mississippian valley!

Two hundred years have passed away, and with them the glory of the Spanish arms; but the great country, watered from the Rocky Mountains, fell into other hands, and when it came under the dominion of the Anglo-Saxon race, it might almost be said that "a nation was born in a day." The Spaniards took possession at first, but did no more for its civilization than the wandering aboriginal tribes; the French succeeded, and still the Mississippi flowed through a solitude; at length Congress bought the territory, and soon the face of nature underwent a change; merrily rung the axe in wild brushwood brakes, villages started into existence where wigwams were before; the planter laid out his cotton-fields; the sugar cane rose amid blackened stumps, and the Indian retired gloomily up the Arkansas to bide his final time—a time not far distant when his race shall all be gathered to their fathers, near the Great Spirit whom they adore.

The vast resources of this valley we can scarcely exaggerate by the most glowing description. Already a thousand steamers ply on its rivers, conveying to New Orleans the products of various climates and various soils; powerful vessels daily leave Pittsburg on the Ohio, for the Gulf of Mexico, a distance of 2100 miles; from St. Louis, high-pressure boats ascend to the Falls of St. Anthony on the one river, and on the other—the Missouri, into regions yet unknown;

quite a fleet of these ships belong to Cincinnati alone, and all day long you may hear on the broad waters the hum of an active, energetic, and money-making race. Then, who can tell how many millions of human beings the virgin soil of Wisconsin, Iowa, and Illinois could feed,—how many successive crops of wheat could, without manure or drains, be extracted from the prairie land, or how many populous cities will yet appear in spots where fifty years ago the hunter dwelt alone? Why, St. Louis already contains 120,000 inhabitants, and St. Louis is 1200 miles due west of New York. There are Cairos, and Palmyras, and Troys, and Alexandrias, and Salems there too,—small villages, it may be, now; but destined perhaps in after years to rival the wealth and splendour of their famous namesakes in the east.

The quantity of breadstuffs, cotton, sugar, tobacco, pork, lard, hemp, and other productions, annually carried down the Mississippi is amazing; and when we recollect that the cultivated spots are as yet mere oases in the wilderness, can we fail to remark that this country, under free institutions, inhabited by such a people, bids fair to occupy a leading place in history, when old worn-out monarchies have crumbled to their fall?

Nor must we forget the region of the Great Lakes—Superior, Michigan, Huron, St. Clair, Erie, and Ontario, the importance of which we at home can scarcely appreciate. They are 1470 miles long, they have a coast of nearly 5000 miles, and an incredible number of large paddle-wheel steamers, propellers, barques, schooners, and sloops, ply between the various ports on their shores. The quays and wharves of the new cities which almost every year are rising up in these vast inland seas, may be seen constantly covered with merchandise discharged from, or about to be placed on board of the trading craft, and both on the American and Canadian side, rich mineral districts, and plains of wonderful fertility attract the settler. The Welland Canal, round the Falls of Niagara, connects Erie with Ontario, and very soon a

similar mode of communication past the Sault St. Marie will enable ships to bring the copper of Lake Superior to Buffalo and Detroit. You are often, even in a fast steamboat, for hours out of sight of land; Lake Erie, being shallow, is subject to frequent and violent storms, very destructive to property and life; when I first saw Lake Michigan, huge waves were rolling in like avalanches, and breaking on the beach in foam; and on Lake Ontario I experienced, greatly to my own astonishment, all the horrors of sea-sickness.

Let us here, instead of continuing to generalise, select a few particular scenes out of the many which interest the traveller in the United States of America, a description of which, from notes taken down on the spot, may convey to some minds a better idea of natural objects and of the mode of travelling, than any statements, however minute and accurate, not conveyed in the narrative form.

We are now in a railroad train among the Green Mountains of Vermont, crossing and recrossing the Winooski, or Onion River, which, in some places, boils and foams between rugged rocks, and, at others, winds along grassy valleys, adorned with well-built farm-houses and noble trees. Every few miles we arrive at a village, beautifully situated on a plain covered with rich meadows and fields of Indian corn; and, at midday, turn towards the north, to follow the course of the noblest stream in New England—the Connecticut, or River of Pines. This valley, when cleared and well cultivated, will be one of the most fertile grain districts in North America. The hamlets, with their white church spires, and school-houses embosomed in apple trees, the overhanging rocks, and distant hills, form pleasing objects in the landscape. At Wells, we strike off up the Ammonoosuck to Littleton, where a coach, drawn by six horses, is in readiness to convey us to the Franconia Notch in the White Mountains. This is one of the wildest regions in the United States. From the top of the stage we have a wide prospect over forests, pastoral valleys,

ravines, and dingles; Mount Lafayette rising before us in solemn majesty, and behind us, far as the eye can reach, an undulating country, stretching away towards the frontiers of Canada. For the first three miles the drive lies through a tangled wood, and up an ascent so steep that our team occasionally pauses. The road is so narrow that the trees touch the carriage on both sides at the same time, and so rough, that passengers hold on firmly for their lives; yet the coachman drives his six in hand with the utmost ease and skill. The horses are young and handsome, such as you see in an English gentleman's establishment, worth £40 to £70. They are all purchased in spring, and sold when, in autumn, the season closes. Darkness has now overtaken us, and by the faint light of the moon, we mistake larch trees for the pinnacles of churches, and oak copses for vast hotels. At length we emerge into an opening, and drive up to the commodious Profile House, a large wooden building, so called on account of a singularly striking profile of an old man presented by a rock near the summit of the adjoining hill. It stands at the highest level of the Franconia Pass or Notch, and at the head waters of the Pemigiwassett, near defiles, chasms, and waterfalls, which delight the citizens of New York and Boston. After all, they appear paltry in comparison with Swiss, or even Scotch, scenery; but the stranger will never weary of the vegetation of the woods, where, now and then, he finds clumps of giant hemlock trees, towering far above cedars, pines, elms, oaks, black, green, and white birches, and maples, rock and white. From the rock maple they extract sugar, camping out in the forest to obtain the juice. Every now and then a snake darts across your path, and blue jays, partridges, and owls enliven solitudes disturbed by the presence of restless and wide-wandering man. Let us now retrace our steps as far as Franconia village, where the stage turns to the right to cross a hillside, over a bad road or rather stony track, to Bethlehem, a little town half way between Littleton and the North of the Saco and the White Mountains,

properly so-called, Mount Lafayette being situated at a considerable distance from the others in this imposing range. Having changed horses, we proceed in the direction of the pass, every now and then emerging from dense, damp, and tangled woods into clearings indicative of an industrious people, whose neat white houses, well-filled barns, and fat cattle, attest their descent from the Anglo-Saxons. Land is worth two dollars to six dollars an acre in this part of New Hampshire. To clear it they set fire to the forest, then cut down the charred timber, and allow the stumps to remain in the ground till rotten enough to be ploughed down by oxen. Before us rise the sombre summits of Mounts Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Franklin, and Monro; but a misty shroud conceals the top of Mount Washington, 6243 feet high. Again giant trees obscure our view, and slowly we pursue our way across marshy hollows. Another opening—we look again towards the everlasting hills, and behold the tints of evening sunshine illumine Agiocochook, "The Throne of the Great Spirit," as the Indians call the highest mountain in the United States. The cloud has rolled away, and, among these bulwarks of Nature, it stands out in commanding majesty, like a presiding deity. The imagination of the red man gave it its appropriate name. At the head of the pass stands the Crawford House, a large wooden inn, with most extensive stables and outhouses, open from April till September for the accommodation of those who wish to ascend the mountain. The Saco, for a long distance below it, rushes through a narrow defile, descending eight hundred feet in three miles, then waters a grassy valley covered with apple trees, and beyond Bartlett meanders in a wide plain, resembling very much some of the valleys in Northern Lombardy, and that in Styria near Gratz. But there are many signs of a more enterprising people than those under Austrian rule. Nowhere in the world will the stranger find a more thriving, comfortable, and independent, a better educated, or a more moral and religious peasant proprietary,

than inhabit this New England district. We have now left Conway, its capital, and, after a tedious journey of many hours through oak copses, have arrived at Centre Harbour, on Lake Winnipiseogee, "The Beautiful Lake" of the Indians, associated with not a few romantic legends of the wars between the pale faces and the former possessors of the soil. Most of these sheets of water in North America have monotonous shores, unrelieved by cliffs, promontories, or islands; but the one on which our dove-like steamer now skims, differs in these respects entirely from its neighbours. So interspersed are wood and water, that we doubt whether Winnipiseogee is a lake, a river, or only the effect of an inundation on a beautiful plain. Vegetation luxuriates on its banks, peaked and isolated hills stand like sentinels around it, and towards the north an amphitheatre of lofty mountains secludes it from the world.

The scenery in Massachusetts, Maine, Rhode Island, and Connecticut, presents few features of much interest. Hills and dales, rivers and plains, snugly situated villages, white houses and whiter spires, pleasantly diversify the rural districts; while every now and then the traveller arrives at a manufacturing community located on the banks of a stream which affords a sufficiency of water power. Even in the primitive woods he hears the mill bell and the wheel which drives the spinning jenny and the loom. The small towns with their wide and straight streets, shaded by rows of trees, cover six or eight times as much ground as those in Europe. The steepled church always occupies the most conspicuous site; near it is the school-house, and most of the private dwellings stand separate in a garden plot, are built of wood, painted white, with green blinds, and have verandahs, on which, in the summer evenings, the inhabitants sit in family groups as in sunny Italy. The peninsulas and promontories on the coast afford picturesque stances for villas, and there you may see the ornamented residences of the rich peeping out from

among groves of dwarf cedars, acacias, oaks, beeches, hickory, sassafras, and fir trees, and rocks, covered with so scanty a soil, that you wonder at the luxuriance of the foliage and the beauty of the flowers.

Let us transport ourselves to Albany, the capital of the State of New York, situated on a hill side sloping down to the Hudson, and commanding a remarkable view of the busy valley watered by that stream, bounded on the north by Mount Ida, with Troy at its base, and on the south by the distant Catskills. We have descended from the upper part of the city and mingle with a crowd of five or six hundred people, who are hurrying on board one of those floating palaces which render travelling agreeable on the great rivers of the United States. Leaving our fellow-passengers to their newspapers, novels, ice-water, and sherry-cobblers, we go up to the hurricane deck to enjoy a sail far superior in picturesque beauty to that between Mayence and Coblentz on the Rhine. For several miles below Albany the Hudson is too shallow for ships of considerable burthen, and numerous islands render the navigation difficult. The land on both sides is highly cultivated, and adorned by many large mansions, belonging principally to the wealthy descendants of the original Dutch settlers. As you approach the town of Hudson the river expands, assuming a more majestic appearance, and affording depth of water for vessels of greater tonnage. Towards the west, the wooded summits of the Catskill mountains now rise into view. On one of them a large hotel has been erected, which, during the season, is crowded with the beauty and fashion of the larger towns, especially New York. Few cities in the world possess a more magnificent retreat, supplied with all the comforts of civilization, yet situated in the midst of a primeval forest, and overlooking a country to the westward, where not many living voices have been heard since the Indian sorrowfully forsook his childhood's home. In the upper part even of the Empire State many thousand acres of

rich land have not yet been tilled, and thousands more are scarcely known except to the hunter who chases in these solitudes the stag or the bear.

How bright and cheerful are the little towns and villages on the banks of the Hudson! Their white houses, large hotels, and wooden piers, at every turn offer temptations to the painter; and Poughkeepsie, the prettiest of these quiet abodes, reminds us of the Italian hamlets which overhang the lovely Lake of Como. But now beauty gives place to grandeur; the steamer has called at Newburgh, and approaches the far-famed "Highlands," that wild scene, where the river under vast perpendicular cliffs and overhanging forests of foliage forces its way through the gorge of the Matteawan Mountains. The Crow's Nest frowns before us, the banks recede, the shadows fall, the wind eddies behind granite rocks far above us, we can see trees on the edge of the precipice, we can almost fancy ourselves in the bay of Kussnacht on the Lake of Lucerne, and we feel solemnized by the sublimity of that defile which gives the great river free egress to the sea. For a moment we stop at West Point, the seat of the United States Military Academy, and looking upwards to the pillar which commemorates the virtues of Kosciusko, we pronounce its situation finer than that of Asmanhausen or St. Goar. Below Peekshill the Hudson widens into a spacious lake called the Tappaan Zee, the most conspicuous object on whose shores is the great state prison of Sing Sing; then, contracting again, has for its western boundary for several miles a singular wall of columnar rock, varying from forty to three hundred feet in height, and named the Palisades. The life and variety on the waters and the shores of this river will strike the stranger. Every few minutes steamers shoot past, ferry boats cross the bows of the vessel which conveys him, eager crowds wait on the landing-places, and innumerable sloops, spreading an extraordinary extent of canvas for their size, tack up and down in all directions. But passengers now begin to look after their baggage, the steersman's bell tingles

twice, the engine slows, then stops, the ship swings round to a quay among a wilderness of masts, and we find ourselves rubbing shoulders with the busy population of New York.

CHAPTER XXI.

Lake George—Ticonderoga—Utica and the valley of the Mohawk—Trenton Falls—The agricultural districts—Rearing of stock in Kentucky—Products of America—The prairie land of Illinois—Wheat fields of Ohio—Corn-growing in Western New York—Rochester—The Genesee plains—Mineral wealth of the Union—Visit to the Falls of Niagara.

We now change the scene of our excursions, and on an August evening sit in the verandah of the large wooden hotel which welcomes travellers to the hamlet of Caldwell at the southern extremity of Lake George. Several pleasure boats, and the tiny little steamer "John Jay," lie at the rustic quay which terminates the garden; we had encountered a thunderstorm on our journey from Saratoga, and now that darkness has closed around, sheet lightning illuminates every alternate moment the heavens, the lake, and the wooded hills on the opposite shore. The atmosphere is so balmy that we feel loth to retire to rest; the rain has sweetened the breath of Nature; each electric flash discovers new beauties in the prospect, and the waters, unruffled even by a passing breeze, invite contemplation and repose.

> "'Twas one of those ambrosial eves
> A day of storms so often leaves."

Next morning, bright and beautiful, finds us steaming up Lake Horicon, or, as the Catholics from the transparent purity of its water designated it, Lake Sacrament. How much more expressive the Indian, or that name given by the missionaries, than the Anglo-American title which it now bears! Innumerable legends are connected with its inlets and headlands, and in former times holy founts in distant towns were supplied from its pellucid waves. In some places it very much resembles Loch Lomond,

and like it varies greatly in width—now expanding so as to afford space for many islands clothed with verdure and picturesquely formed—again contracting between frowning cliffs, where not a house or clearing appears among the trees and rocks. On the eastern shore Black Mountain rears its gloomy summit above a hundred rolling hills covered to their cones with wood; and in some places so narrow is the channel among little islets of every conceivable shape, that we imagine ourselves among the Thousand Islands of the St. Lawrence, or the wild vegetation of the Swedish lakes. Arrived at the northern extremity, we get on the top of a stage* and drive over a rising ground, dotted with oak and chestnut trees like an English nobleman's park, to Fort Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain, so celebrated in the revolutionary war. Soon the "Canada," a steamer unexcelled in point of internal arrangement and decoration, reaches the wooden quay on which we wait. She has come from Whitehall, through the Trossach scenery at the southern end of this much admired lake, and we proceed in her as far as Burlington, a thriving town in Vermont, backed by the Green Mountains, and commanding a beautiful prospect of the sharp peaks of the Adirondack hills on the opposite shore. Lake Champlain stretches into Canada for several miles after passing St. John's. Where you leave the railroad from Montreal, and embark on board the steamer, nothing is visible except the unvarying forest; but the banks belonging to the United States display a pleasing variety of cultivated fields, snug villages, and belts of wood, bare crags now and then relieving the wide expanse of green. Though scarcely so grand as Horicon, or so striking as the Highlands of the Hudson, this sheet of water possesses perhaps more artistic beauties than any other in North America.

We visit now a different scene. One of those tremendous thunderstorms, which in summer sometimes burst upon the fertile plains of the Union, has overtaken us at Utica, a thriving town of 20,000 inhabitants, in the broad

* Stage is the American designation of stage-coach.

and wealthy valley of the Mohawk. In a few hours the river has risen above all its banks; fish leap among the Indian corn plants, and men in boats rescue drift timber floating on meadows where cattle grazed the day before. We seize the opportunity to cross the hills to Trenton Falls, a series of wild cataracts on the West Canada Creek, in a comparatively remote district of the country. An ascent five miles long leads to the summit of the ridge, from which we look down on a prospect remarkably like that which greets the traveller, who, having traversed the chain of the Apennines from Bologna southwards, arrives at the brow of the hill near Fiesole, and looks down on Val d'Arno and beautiful Florence. The plank road is somewhat out of repair, so we do not progress very rapidly; but at length we reach the defile, and hear the roaring of the troubled stream. The time is well chosen; for the waters are pouring down in terrific volume, and their brownish amber tinge contrasts in a very striking manner with the dark green foliage hanging over the chasm. The flood has covered the usual pathway under the beetling cliffs; so in order to see the various leaps, which are some distance apart, we have to penetrate the tangled boughs of the forest, now emerging into what Ariosto calls a

"Fresca stanza fra l'ombre più nascose,"

now torn in thickets which obscure the light of day, and again finding ourselves on a giddy ledge two hundred feet above a rapid, roaring in its strength. The luxuriance of vegetation is charming; a few of the trees have begun to change colour, and autumn tints of red and yellow enliven the solemnity of pines. Here and there a majestic hemlock rears its crest into the heavens, and every now and then drives a drenching spray into our faces, as we put aside the branches to take another peep down into the abyss where the waters roar. We are here alone with Nature in her wildest mood, we feel as if the sublime scene around us had just come fresh from its Creator's hand, and our imagination, seizing the

reins, transports us, in fancy, far beyond the portals of this every-day world.

We must now, however, visit the agricultural districts, and say a word regarding those vast plains which may well be called the granary of the western hemisphere. To form any correct idea of American farming, it is necessary to leave the great beaten tracks, the lines of railways and steamers, and saunter along the byeways of the land. In new England the soil, being in general light and rocky, does not produce heavy crops of grain; but it is admirably adapted for raising live stock, and its pasturages afford dainty food to thousands of horses, sheep, and horned cattle. Not only in the eastern, but even in the young States bordering on the Mississippi, agricultural fairs are now annually held, and to them multitudes repair to see and learn. The people of Kentucky have, of late, taken a great interest in the improvement of the breeds of domestic animals. One joint-stock company has imported largely from Great Britain and the continent of Europe, and has sold their importations at very high prices. They are said to have realized 25,000 dollars by their last adventure; 1000 dollars were given for a single bull, and 200 dollars for a sow. Some leading men in that State, Henry Clay, for example, have been active farmers, and their exertions have fostered the scientific spirit now abroad in that part of the country. Much attention is also there given to the rearing of mules for the southern plantations. They are said to be cheaper to feed, and to last longer than horses, when worked on the rice and cotton fields of the slave States. The best judges prefer as food for horses the leaves of the Indian corn, bruised and sprinkled over with its meal. Oats do not thrive well in America, and the maize itself they pronounce too heating. Virginia and the districts adjacent to it grow immense quantities of tobacco; Georgia and the Carolinas have a name for excellent rice; the sugar-cane flourishes in Louisiana; and every one knows that nearly our entire supply of cotton comes from the United States,

south of the thirty-sixth parallel of latitude; but wheat and Indian corn may be called *the products* of North America. The splendid alluvial lands in the Mississippian valley, sometimes one hundred feet deep, require no manure, but, for a long term of years, have gone on producing more and more, instead of showing any symptoms of exhaustion; and wheat can be raised for ten shillings a quarter on the prairies of the north-western States. During my tour, in the autumn of 1853, in a railroad car between Indianopolis and Bellefontaine, I turned the conversation on agricultural matters, nearly all the group of passengers around me being farmers. Illinois, they agreed, was the finest State in the Union. Some settlers there own 1000 acres of land, and raise seventy-five bushels of Indian corn per acre; and farms of 500 to 600 acres are quite common. It is the general opinion that when railroads have been constructed throughout that State, the proprietors of its soil will become enormously wealthy. Indiana is less fertile and far more densely wooded. Uncleared land sells for twelve dollars an acre there; cleared, but poor land, brings twenty-five dollars to thirty dollars, while the best corn land cannot be got under fifty dollars. Strange to say, in Illinois, prairies requiring very little labour to bring them under cultivation, can still be purchased at ten dollars to twelve dollars an acre. This difference arises from its being somewhat further off from the markets of the eastern States; but railroads will soon obviate an objection which every year becomes of less and less importance. I have myself seen Indian corn twelve to fourteen feet high on the central prairies of Illinois; and intelligent fellow-travellers told me that thousands upon thousands of bushels, both of it and wheat, are left to rot on the more inaccessible lands every fall. It is no unusual thing to turn the pigs into fields of grain which will not bear the cost of reaping and transportation. In some parts of America they cut off the heads, or rather, tops of the maize to be given as fodder to the cattle. Very often, too, between the plants of this cereal, grows

a sort of pumpkin, called squash, the huge oval fruit of which has, generally, a bright orange colour, and remains on the field after the corn has been removed. It then looks remarkably well and imparts quite an air of comfort to the country. "If ever Providence," says Hawthorne, in his "Mosses from an Old Manse," "should assign me a superfluity of gold, part of it shall be expended for a service of plate, or most delicate porcelain, to be wrought into the shapes of summer squashes, gathered from vines which I will plant with my own hands."

The traveller, in the United States, every now and then finds, stretched out before him, a tract of country of immense resources, waving with corn, well watered, possessing a natural slope, invaluable for drainage, and affording clover fields for thousands of plump cattle. Such is the character of the prospect from Laurel Hill, on the west side of the Alleghanies, between Cumberland and the Monongahela river; such the view of the Connecticut valley from Mount Holyoke; such the plain of Lexington in Kentucky. But we shall now, if my readers choose, take a trip across the enterprising State of Ohio. Having a rich soil and abundant facilities for the transit of grain, it supplies Europe with an ever-increasing quantity of provisions, and supports a population occupying a very conspicuous and influential position in the republic. We travel slowly in the old lumbering stage, before the railroads were formed between Cincinnati and the Lake. We find ourselves, after leaving behind the villas and orchards near that great city, amidst vast fields of wheat, the decaying stumps of the trees relieving the brilliant green of the springing blade, and neat farm-houses now and then showing their white walls between the branches of elm and maple which shelter them from the heat of a July sun. A large proportion of the land, however, appears to be still uncleared, the primeval forests often extending as far as the eye can reach, over hill and dale. In the south part of the State they cultivate Indian corn extensively, and

rye grows on the poorer soils; but wheat is the staple crop, being, in ordinary seasons, the most remunerative to the farmer. The grain is ground at the grist mills, one of which serves for every four or five farms, and then transported, either to Cincinnati for shipment down the river to New Orleans, or to the ports of Lake Erie, where it is carried by propellers to Buffalo, and from thence despatched by canal to New York. The average value of the farms was, in 1846, forty dollars per acre; and but little attention has as yet been paid to improved methods of cultivation, it being less expensive to clear new tracts than to manure and drain those already prepared for seed. We dine at Xenia and spend the night at Columbus, the country beyond which is exceedingly fertile and picturesque; the forests appear in all the freshness of their early summer mantle, and the splendid wheat crops bear witness to a land of promise. The first settlers in this district have long since quitted their habitations to feed their cattle on prairies beyond the Missouri, discovered within the memory of living men. These pioneers of civilization are a nomadic race, never remaining to enjoy the fruits of their toils, but treading close upon the footsteps of the Indians as they retire before the pale-faces towards the setting sun. In Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee, they grow maize for the express purpose of feeding pigs, with which the woods literally teem, and millions of which, every year, are, at Cincinnati, slaughtered and salted for export, besides supplying innumerable boxes of bristles and barrels of lard. In 1853, I travelled over the part of Ohio bordering on Lake Erie, from Sandusky to Buffalo, and found it a fertile and densely populated district, with well-enclosed fields, large farm-houses, prettily situated towns, good roads, numerous churches, and a rich soil producing amazing crops of clover, wheat, and maize. It reminded me strongly of Lincolnshire, and some of the corn-growing midland counties of England.

The valley of the Mohawk, extending westward from Albany, was not settled by white men till after the

revolution; and several years even subsequent to that event it continued the country where the Oneidas hunted the beaver, where the bears roamed as monarchs and the wolves pursued the deer. The Indians themselves called it "the dismal wilderness." I visited it in the autumn of 1853, and then it looked anything but a newly-discovered region of the western world. A fertile, open, and beautiful country—wooded like an English nobleman's park, varied by hill and dale, watered by fresh streams, with multitudes of farm-houses, villages, and market towns—it proclaims itself a land of plenty for man and beast. All the way to Buffalo by Utica, Rome, Syracuse, Auburn, and a multitude of other places, doubling their population every few years, I passed through a district unexcelled, as far as agricultural wealth is concerned, by any in North America. Rochester, on the falls of the Genessee, now contains upwards of 40,000 inhabitants, chiefly employed in grinding the wheat produced in the well-known valley of that river; and thousands of barrels of whose flour annually find their way to Europe. Many of the farmers are Scotchmen, men of enterprise and skill, who cultivate 200 to 250 acres each, and are rapidly acquiring wealth. Land there is worth 100 dollars per acre. Rochester, from its favourable situation, enjoys much of the produce trade both on the canal to Albany and, by means of Lake Ontario, down the St. Lawrence. No country which I have seen excels in richness of soil and rural beauty the plain of the Genessee. The land is a deep vegetable loam; the trees are larger and more graceful than those which you usually see in the northern States; the grass looks remarkably fresh; lawns of great extent and natural advantages offer delightful sites for villas; large fields of Indian corn and buckwheat alternate with meadows on which graze sheep and cattle; clear streams run in the hollows; and the farm-houses strike one as very pictures of neatness and prosperity.

The United States abound in minerals; Pennsylvania alone has a coalfield covering an area five times larger

than that of the same layer in Great Britain; in the north-west part of Illinois, round about Galena, an inexhaustible supply of lead lies close to the surface; Missouri has a mountain composed solely of iron, and the earliest navigators who visited the sea-coast found the savages in possession of ornaments made from copper which no doubt came from the vast fields of that metal on the shores of Lake Superior. Pittsburg, the "Sheffield of America," can scarcely be seen on account of the dense smoke from its furnaces; and sailing down the Monongahela I noticed that the hills were pierced in every direction with shafts, from the mouths of which railroads with excessively steep gradients convey the coal to barges on the river, the full wagon in descending, pulling the empty one up the inclined plane.

But now, as in a panorama, the scene changes again, and with reverent footsteps, like Joshua treading on holy ground, we go to gaze and wonder at the Falls of Niagara. Far be it from me to attempt a description of a sight which deprives many men of utterance, and almost takes away the breath. How inadequate are the forms of speech to convey to any mind even the faintest idea of the emotions which swell the bosom of the stranger, when the fond dream of his boyhood becomes a glorious reality, and awe-stricken, ay, trembling, he stands in full view of the mighty cataract! The ground heaves beneath his feet, and every house sensibly vibrates with the concussion of the air. An overwhelming feeling of power binds him to the spot, and the boom of hidden thunders, ever and anon arising from the dread abyss, makes him for the moment imagine himself on the threshold of an unseen and terrible world. We have, from the Buffalo cars, after following for several miles the course of the clear and peaceful river which flows out of Lake Erie, just caught a glance of the rapids in their fearful agony, and retire to our private room in the hotel until the bustle of an arrival is over, and porters and guides have gone; for companions are irksome to us now. Niagara must be visited in silence, and alone.

Even the Indian, who, straying from his fellows, found himself on the brink of that tremendous rift in the adamantine rocks, and beheld the cloud of spray which for ever and ever ascends heavenward from the centre of the Horse Shoe, ceased his war-whoop and his savage dance, and on his knees muttered to the Great Spirit a heartfelt prayer. And we, wearied with the bustle of every day life, retire to some secluded grove of arborvitæ trees, that, with Nature only to bear us company, we may commune with Him "who holdeth the waters in the hollow of His hand." We saunter to the top of the cliff on the American side, but the sunbeams playing among the wreaths of spray prevent us realizing the grandeur of the prospect; so we descend the ladder, and scramble over the ledges as close as possible to the mighty falling mass. The air is cold; we are stunned by the terrific roar, and every now and then a fitful gust of wind blinds us with spray. But steady now for a moment, and sublimity itself awaits us. We hear a hiss and a howl as we look down into the bottomless pit beneath our standing point, and if we can venture an upward look we shall see a sheet of crystal as it were tumbling down from the sky.

"Look up!
Lo where it comes like an eternity,
As if to sweep down all things in its track,
Charming the eye with dread, a matchless cataract."

We may now cross the river in the little boat which conveys strangers to the British shore within reach of the drenching vapour, behold the Falls as they appear revealed in all their magnificence from the Clifton House, and then return by the great suspension bridge, 800 feet long, which has been thrown across the gorge a couple of miles below, at a height of 230 feet above the stream. Now let us take our station on the rustic bridge which crosses the furious surges to Goat Island, just above the American fall. With mighty momentum the water comes down, leaping over driftwood and thrown by stony ledges into pyramids of foam; here the stream rushes along

with dreadful speed, as if driven on by an unseen power; there it bounds against a rifted rock, and is tossed back with an almost supernatural force which sends a cold shiver through your frame. Look up the wild torrent as far as you can see; a well-defined line meets your eye; it is the sudden commencement of the rapids, but looks like the horizon brought near. A day on Goat Island! Would that no stormy ocean separated us from the groves of arborvitæ and forests of maple, which overhang the rapids and clothe the steeps! Would that every summer we could for a few short hours at least recline on its grassy banks, watching the racing and eddying streams, listening to the growl of the cataract, and shaded by the foliage which waves and weeps over little channels between the rocks. There is one spot on it deserving special notice, near the beginning of the wilder rapids opposite the Canadian shore. A splendid vine, from which I plucked delicious grapes, and a red honeysuckle have there climbed to the very top of an arborvitæ situated on a promontory, round which the water moans and bounds like a wounded tiger struggling to be free. Few people know how beautiful the scenery is at these Falls, apart altogether from the water. The deep defile, the steep cliffs, the pine woods, the thickets of cedar and acacia, the villas and hotels themselves form a landscape lovely as the gorgeous creations of Salvator Rosa. We shall take one position more before saying farewell to Nature's masterpiece; but first let us glance at the map that we may believe that ninety millions of tons of water plunge over this precipice every hour. The Niagara River, it tells us, is the only outlet of nearly half the fresh water on the surface of the globe, of lakes and streams covering 150,000 square miles. Every rivulet that finds its way into Lakes Superior, Michigan, Huron, Erie, and St. Clair, to say nothing of countless other lakes in the western wilderness, has no passage to the ocean except over the cataract; and eagerly, majestically, and unceasingly leaps the river, broad as the Clyde at Dumbarton, the Mersey at Liverpool, or the Tay at

Dundee. The oftener it is visited, the grander it appears. It is evening now.

> "From yonder trees we see the western sky
> All washed with fire, while, in the midst, the sun
> Beats like a pulse, welling at ev'ry beat
> A spreading wave of light."

Just as the last beams of day make the white surges sparkle like jewels in a crown, we reach the top of the signal tower on the Terrapin Rock. Tinged with gold the wild waters rush on to take the final plunge; graceful foliage dyed with the hues of autumn hang over them like queenly drapery; coloured rays dart through the woods on Goat Island, and the great cloud of spray sparkles for a moment in the glare of the sinking luminary. Now comes the cold wind from Lake Erie, sighing in the tree tops, whistling among the rocks, and swaying to and fro the awful pillar which shall rise in middle air from the base of the Horse Shoe Fall till time shall be no more. A voice of thunder speaks to us from the abyss below; the shifting breeze blinds us with vapour; and another gust shows us Hesper glittering in the front of heaven and heralding the night.

CHAPTER XXII.

Norfolk to Richmond in Virginia—The James River—Harper's Ferry on the Potomac—The Ohio—Steaming on the Mississippi—Night on the "Father of Waters"—A scene on the Cumberland sand bar—"Sparring"—Staging in America—Corduroy roads—Ohio before the railroads—Journey from Louisville to the Mammoth cave—Mouth of the Mississippi, and New Orleans.

Early in the spring of 1846 I embarked at Norfolk in a fast little steamer for Richmond, the capital of Virginia, and the chief seat of the tobacco manufacture. For four hours we sailed up the estuary of James River, which gradually contracted in width till it became scarcely broad enough to allow the vessel to turn. The air was

delightful, and the morning sun darted down his rays on the mirror-like water, reflecting on its surface the images of noble trees and the masts of fishing sloops with their sails hanging listlessly from the yards. Not a sound disturbed Nature's quietude but the quick splashing of the paddle-wheels and the flapping of the sea-fowls' wings, as, scared by the approach of man, they rose from their nests on the sea. When the river narrowed, the scenery became more picturesque. The woods, recovering from a severe winter's frost, rejoiced in the genial heat of a southern sun. The deep green of the grass and maple-trees contrasted with the darker shade of the pine; red and white fruit blossoms peeped out from the thickets of copsewood; birds of every hue hopped on the long overhanging branches, and from countless sweet wild flowers a delightful perfume was wafted on the gentle breeze. Turning suddenly round some rocky point the steamer occasionally passed the beautiful residence of a planter, with its apple orchard and nicely mown lawn, and surrounded by fields of Indian corn. A little further on and all was once more solitude. It is gloomy and cheerless to wander alone in these aged woods, deserted since the last of the Powhattans fled to their retreats in the west. No track can you find but that of the prowling wolf; no axe awakens the echoes of the groves; not a tree has been hewn, not a branch lopped off there; the seed fell and took root; the young plant grew till it became a hoar denizen of the forest; time withered its branches and decayed its trunk; a blast from the north laid it prostrate on the ground; there it lay withering for ages; other trees have grown up in its place, and in their turn fallen a sacrifice; yet the settlers still let them alone, and there they stand, not much altered since Sir Walter Raleigh took possession of the country in the name of the Virgin Queen.

Of all the picturesque scenes which I witnessed in America, none remains so firmly impressed upon my memory as Harper's Ferry, where the clear limpid Shenandoah, from the upland wilds of Virginia, unites

its waters with the Potomac. "The passage of the Potomac through the Blue Ridge," wrote President Jefferson, "is, perhaps, one of the most stupendous scenes in nature. You stand on a very high point of land; on your right comes up the Shenandoah, having ranged along the foot of the mountain a hundred miles to seek a vent. On your left approaches the Potomac, in quest of a passage also; in the moment of their junction, they rush together against the mountain, rend it asunder, and pass off into the sea."

During my first visit to the United States, I sailed down the Ohio, from Pittsburgh to Cincinnati, a distance of nearly 500 miles. The scenery is picturesque, but monotonous. The hills wooded to their summits, the limestone bluffs covered with verdure, the flourishing little towns, the fertile plains dotted with the white houses of settlers, the corn-fields, and orchards seemed to me so like each other, that I sometimes imagined the steamer's progress to be a delusion. Occasionally, however, the river expands so as to present the appearance of a lowland lake, and near the "Queen City of the West," the hills on the northern bank have by industrious Germans been planted after the Rhenish fashion with vines, which, having a good southern exposure and a genial climate, now yield a considerable quantity of wine. Hemp grows extensively in Kentucky, and every now and then you find power-loom factories for making from it bagging to bale the cotton. The sheds for drying tobacco are also prominent objects on the left bank of the stream. But let me now carry my reader in fancy to St. Louis, the commercial capital of the vast region lying between the Rocky Mountains and the Alleghanies, where last year I embarked in the high-pressure steamer, "Tishomingo," on the Mississippi. The Mississippi! the very name must be reverently pronounced. The first sight of the mighty stream produces emotions similar to those felt at the Falls of Niagara. I have no sympathy with men who can speak of it in disrespectful terms, as

muddy, tiresome, and uninteresting. Think of its course —3000 miles—of its maintaining a uniform breadth of rather more than a mile through ten degrees of latitude, from the Belize to where the Missouri, clayey and discoloured, pollutes its transparent waves, of the destiny yet awaiting it when the forests shall have fallen to make way for grain fields and cities, and millions of Anglo-Americans shall have fairly possessed the land. The individual who affects to ridicule the "Father of Waters," must, to my mind, be destitute either of the capacity to appreciate sublimity, or of all interest in the advancement of his race. At the junction of the Mississippi with the Missouri, watching the struggle between the clear and the turbid currents, I felt as if in the presence of two powerful giants, whose majesty and influence demanded the homage of every living man.

Thrice tolls the bell on the hurricane deck, the negroes "fire up" with energy, the mate hauls in the gangway, the pilot with eager eye grasps the wheel, and the "Tishomingo" backs off from the levee, the temporary mail-boat for Louisville, the regular liner, "General Pike," having a few days before struck a snag, and gone down in three minutes afterwards. Now we swing round; puff! puff! goes the steam alternately from the pipes, the paddle-wheels revolve, and running with the current, we soon leave St. Louis far behind. The night was stormy, and dark as pitch. The accuracy of the steering amazed me; sometimes the foliage of the trees seemed impending over us; once or twice she gently touched a sand-bar, and occasionally I caught a glimpse of a snag close to the vessel; but in an hour or two I could not see two yards ahead, and yet on we went full speed as if on an open sea! The bell ringing and the bumping on the ground prevented me sleeping very soundly. Next morning, when I got on deck, the steamer was landing cargo at Cape Girardeau, 130 miles below the city we had left. There are no quays or piers on the western streams; the boats go up bows

into the soft mud banks—a plank is laid between the deck and the shore, and passengers scramble up and down the bluffs as they best can. How solemn and grand are the unbroken forests! I sat for hours near the pilot's lofty house, gazing at them in their many-coloured autumn dress, and watching the majestic flow of the river. Our passengers seemed to be chiefly youngsters farming in the west, prodigal of oaths, accoutred in all the vulgarity of Mississippian fashion, chewing tobacco without intermission, and using the entire deck as a spittoon. I got into conversation with an intelligent Spaniard from Cardenas in Cuba, who had been up the Missouri shooting deer, and with an exceedingly excellent lady, who taught a school in Indiana, one of that meritorious class who disseminate throughout the entire Union the principles of Christian truth, and are very guardian angels in many half-civilized districts of the west. After dinner the knives of the company were brought out, and dandies in blue coats and patent leather boots commenced energetically to whittle. Twenty wooden shanties at the mouth of the Ohio constitute the famed city of Cairo; and there, followed by flocks of turkey-buzzards and disturbing myriads of ducks the "Tishomingo" turned up that stream. We had steamed as fast as possible, but darkness closed in before we reached the dreaded sand-bar at the mouth of the Cumberland, ten miles above Paducah, in Kentucky. Great detention had lately been experienced by the packets at this impediment to navigation, and all hands turned out on deck to see whether or not our lightly laden craft would be able to cross. A bend of the river all at once revealed to us one of the most strikingly picturesque scenes which it has been my good fortune to witness. There was the noble Ohio, clear, broad, and tranquil, flowing on peacefully, in the starlight, between solemn forests; while, straight ahead, a galaxy of lights indicated the presence of several large steamers aground on the sand bar, and burning pitch pine torches to warn new comers of their position.

"I say, Horsefly," remarked our spare Indiana captain to the Kentucky pilot, some six feet six inches high, "that looks ay leetle bilious, don't it?" "So I reckon," was the curt reply; and the bell tolled for soundings. "Eight feet," sung out Jack with the lead line, in slow recitative tones; "eight feet," echoed the mate, on the hurricane deck, to the steersman above; "six feet large," was the next report, followed in ten seconds by "five feet scant." I had scarcely time to look at my neighbour, when "three feet," rung in my ears; and the "Tishomingo" ran slap on the bar, rolling and thumping as if her frail planks would part. "Go it again, Massa," shouted a merry negro from the "Fashion," a large boat lying near. For a minute we swung in the stream, then, backing off, tried, but in vain, at another point, to the no small amusement of the coloured gentlemen on board the other steamers, who played tunes on fiddles, as they said, to help us over. The yawl was next launched, and a party sent out to discover the best place at which to "spar" the ship across the bank. This singular but safe and simple process is peculiar, as far as I know, to the Mississippian waters, and deserves a word of explanation. Attached to the lofty posts, which extend from the lower deck considerably higher than the hurricane deck of every steamer, near the bow are two stems of large trees, sharpened at the thicker extremity. These are swung round and fixed in the sand, immediately in front of the paddle-wheels. By means of ropes and pulleys, the men, working at the capstan, press these beams into the bed of the river, and thus elevate the bows of the vessel, when the wheels are set in motion, and the ship, thus raised, slips over the sand bar. It necessitates severe exertion on the part of the seamen, and occupies a considerable time. Owing to the excessive darkness of the night, we were unsuccessful in our first attempt; and our captain had, reluctantly, to lie by till Sunday morning, the sparring was then resumed, and we were on the point of getting off, when the "Golden Gate," steaming down the river,

ran into the "Tishomingo," and drove her farther than ever upon the bar. A third trial proved more fortunate, and at eleven o'clock, on one of the loveliest Sabbath mornings I ever beheld, we were again under way, rapidly advancing towards the Cave in the Rock and Shawnee Town in Illinois. On these clear, cold, autumnal nights, nothing can be more beautiful than the reflection of the stars in the Ohio. But that very night, an awful scene occurred on board our vessel. In consequence of the hard work which the men had had to perform on the bar, an extra allowance of spirits had been allowed them; and given out with very little discretion as far as quantity was concerned. Some of the negroes, early in the evening, showed symptoms of intoxication, and about eleven o'clock two of them quarrelled, or, to use the American expression, "had a difficulty;" one seized a piece of coal and broke the nose of his adversary, then, alarmed at what he had done, having "got scared," according to the account of the other deck hands, he ran aft and sprung overboard, sinking to rise no more before the engine could be stopped or any effort made to save him. Next day we reached Portland, and drove, in rickety carriages, to Louisville, "the Falls City" and metropolis of "Old Kentuck."

One cold cheerless morning in October, at half-past three o'clock, I was roused from my bed in the Louisville Hotel, to take my place in the Nashville stage, in which I intended to travel as far as the Mammoth Cave in Edmonston county, a distance of ninety-five miles. Nearly an hour was very uselessly spent in driving about town to pick up passengers; nevertheless, day had not long dawned before we stopped for breakfast at the first changing place. An American stage is a clumsy vehicle, made to stand very hard usage, seldom washed, and seated for nine inside passengers, besides one on the box with the driver, who generally merely accompanies his own team. Indeed, ten or fourteen miles of such roads as are common in the United States try the physical powers of any charioteer. It requires no little

muscular exertion to guide four spirited horses in such circumstances, with snaffle bridles, and at the same time to manage the drag. Sometimes the wheels for miles and miles sink deep in sand. Once I saw men actually ploughing the road to make it better, and often the stones thrown down in order to improve it form more serious impediments than the holes themselves. When ladies are in the question, too, these coaches frequently carry many more than their complement, the gentlemen, in accordance with American custom, submitting to be squeezed into a corner rather than not act gallantly towards the fair sex. I recollect, in Georgia, passing over a few miles of the most awful tracks under the sun, in a stage of the dirtiest description, the mud and water frequently up to the axles, and the vehicle rolling about like a ship in a storm. Sometimes we all expected an instant capsize; sometimes we ran slap against a tree; and at others the driver, seeking a smoother way through the wood, got his team entangled in the foliage. In central Illinois I was one night in a stage drawn by four well fed horses, and did not discover, until we had proceeded some miles, that the driver was drunk, and had been once or twice asleep in the course of an hour. We were travelling over the open prairie, uncultivated and unfenced, and could see nothing but the stars. Then we entered a thick wood, and watered the animals on the banks of a creek over which the branches hung in festoons, the feeble twinkling of the celestial luminaries only rendering more striking the forest gloom. On another occasion, at La Salle in the same State, after an execrable dinner at a tavern kept by a rough unwashed gentleman rejoicing in the title of "Colonel" Hardy, I "took my passage" in a kind of cart which traverses the track between that place and the Illinois river, and crossing it, not in a boat, but on a raft, got into a railway truck filled with men, women, children, trunks, boxes of goods, &c. &c., and was hauled up the steep and lofty bluff by a stationary steam engine to meet the cars. But it was on the corduroy roads of

Ohio that I became most intimately acquainted with stage travelling in America. It is impossible to do justice by description to this primitive sort of locomotion; one must experience before realizing the sensations produced by such drives. We started from the inn door at Columbus, I well remember, at a hand gallop, and I was congratulating myself on the prospect of a pleasant journey, when the coach as near as possible capsized in a hole apparently unfathomable, and I found that the so-called road was a mere track cleared of trees, the stumps of which had been in some places removed, but not in all, and laid in boggy spots crossways with logs of wood, to prevent the vehicle disappearing under the soil. No pickaxe had ever been used in its construction; not a ravine had been filled up; not a protruding rock removed; no fence protected you from the precipice or the neighbouring wheat-field from you; and instead of crossing rivers by means of bridges, we descended the steep bank with the assistance of the drag, plunged pell-mell into the stream, and urged the horses by unearthly shouts to scramble up the bluff on the opposite shore. Four or five miles an hour is good travelling on the stage routes of America. But I have digressed. We were on our way to the Mammoth Cave, and are crossing the Salt River in what a fellow-traveller said was neither a bridge, nor a boat, nor a barge, but simply "a fixing," before traversing the barrens of Kentucky, a wild district lying between us and Bell's Tavern, which, after fording the Green River, we reached at midnight. The air was bitterly cold, and the foxes were barking in all directions around. A large wooden hotel, capable of accommodating 250 people, has been erected in a dense oak copse at the entrance to the far-famed cavern. To it I drove next morning through the woods, procured lamps, lunch, and a well-known guide, named Stephen. On entering the cave, he turned round and said, "This, sir, is the place described by Virgil—you remember the passage—as the "facile des-

census Averni." During our five hours and nine miles' walk in the bowels of the earth, he spoke both Latin and French, quoted from Greek, Spanish, and German authors, showed some knowledge both of botany and chemistry, and sung with remarkable taste and power. He is an excellent geologist, has read all Sir Charles Lyell's books, and got into raptures when I told him I knew Hugh Miller, whose "Old Red Sandstone" he seemed to have by heart; yet this man of uncommon parts and varied acquirements never received any education from the hands of another, and was then—you may be excused, gentle reader, for doubting my veracity—a negro slave.

The Mammoth Cave has been explored for eighteen miles. It has 165 miles of avenues in all, forty-seven domes, twenty-three pits, and eight cataracts. The Main Avenue is so regular and uniform as to resemble an English railway tunnel on a large scale, the limestone strata on its roof appearing like clouds in the darkness. Then there are the Rotunda, an apartment seated like a lecture-room; the Church, with its pulpit and galleries; the Gothic Chapel, where stalactites and stalagmites meet to form pillars; Gorham's Dome, resembling the cupola of a vast cathedral; the Bottomless Pit, an abyss 165 feet deep; the Valley of Humility, and the Fat Man's Misery, so low and narrow that you can scarcely creep along; the Dead Sea, with waters so perfectly still that when you drop in a stone, their rippling and sighing are audible for ten minutes afterwards; the River Styx, which travellers cross in a boat, and—not to mention many other wonders—the Star Chamber, so called from a number of white spots on its dark roof. When Stephen descended behind the rocks with the lamps, and cast a shadow over the ceiling, the illusion was perfect. I felt convinced that I was in the open air, looking from a deep glen up to a precipice, and viewing a dark cloud gradually obscuring the stars. Silent and sublime is that vast cavern. Wandering

along its aisles and avenues you feel as if, like Moses in the clefts of Sinai, you might every moment see the glory pass before you.

We now change the scene. It is a winter evening—far on in December — but the climate to which I transport my readers is one where winter, in the English sense of the term, is unknown. The air feels balmy, a bright phosphorescent track lies in the wake of the vessel; long-billed pelicans fly lazily around us; we have come from the cocoa-nut groves and sugar-canes of Cuba, "Queen of the Antilles," and are standing on the hurricane-deck of a steamer on the Gulf of Mexico, looking out anxiously ahead for the Belize light. Late at night its halo appeared in the horizon, and next morning early, when I got on deck, the colour of the water had changed, the beautiful blue having given place to the muddy tinge of the mighty Mississippi. A little cutter, making all sail towards us, soon gave us a pilot, and at breakfast-time we "slowed" over the bar at the entrance of the Pass Luter, one of the mouths of the great river. On entering, you see on both sides low marshes, evidently in process of consolidation, drift timber lying in the open spaces of salt lake, between the sedges. Around these logs reeds gradually grow; the stream in freshets washes down soil, and the seeds of plants, carried by birds and by the wind, complete the process. Thus the large delta has been formed, and thus it increases day by day. A few miles farther up, the river flows in one channel only, and the breadth of morass on each side is so trifling that you see the waves of the Gulf breaking almost within gun-shot of the steamer. The Mississippi looks like a mammoth canal, with frail, sedgy banks elevated above the tide-level of the ocean. Now the huts of fishermen begin to peep out of orange groves sparkling with splendid fruit. Dense woods succeed, and then, all the way up to New Orleans, you have a continuous row of sugar plantations, with large grinding and boiling mills, planters' houses, white negro-cottages, and cane-

fields extending for half a mile back to the skirts of the forest. They have a cheerful, thriving appearance, and add much to the beauty of the landscape. So deep is the river that our large steamship sometimes, at bends, nearly touched the mud on shore, and the impending foliage. All the mills are driven by high-pressure steam-engines, and were in full operation. The banks are covered with the bruised cane, which cannot, in Louisiana, as in Cuba, be used as fuel, owing to the dampness of the atmosphere. At five P.M. we swept round a point and beheld "the Crescent City," with its forests of masts, crowd of river steamers, and huge warehouses for cotton and sugar. New Orleans looks well from the Mississippi, but will disappoint the stranger; and, walking in its back streets after rain, he will be at no loss to assign reasons for calling it "the City of the Plague."

CHAPTER XXIII.

View from the Capitol at Montgomery—The wooded plains of Alabama —Scenery of Georgia and the Carolinas—The Forests in Autumn— Unprecedented rise of Western Cities — Cincinnati, St. Louis, Buffalo, Detroit, and Chicago—The Prairies—The Anglo-Saxon invasion of the Far West.

Our imaginary panoramic view shifts again, and we stand on one of the verandahs of the Capitol at Montgomery, the seat of government for the State of Alabama, situated on a lofty bluff, and commanding a magnificent prospect of woods, apparently as boundless as the sea. Immense quantities of cotton grow on the rich bottom lands of this district; on my way up from Mobile I met a great many steamers deeply laden with it. On the top of the banks I observed rude presses for packing the cotton. Fifteen hundred pounds of seed-cotton is the usual produce of an acre, and that quantity gives five hundred pounds of picked cotton. They separate the seed from the down by means of gins,

the latter flying off like chaff, while the former is used for making oil. The bales, when ready for shipment, are without ceremony rolled down the mud-banks to the water's edge.

Indian corn flourishes luxuriantly in the rolling country further north; but about one-third of Alabama remains in the possession of the United States Government, unsettled and wild, and there the live oak and laurel, the hickory and pine, the mulberry, chestnut, cedar, and cypress combine to form

> "The midwood shade
> Where scarce a sunbeam wanders through the gloom."

Returning to the view from the Capitol, at our feet lay the new city, with its wide unpaved streets, where horses step up to their fetlocks in adhesive clay, its "omnium gatherum" shops, brick stores in process of erection, white villas, large hotels, and steepled churches; the Alabama River looked like a great silvery serpent as it wound through the plain, and, far as the eye could reach, on all hands waved an unbroken ocean of foliage. There is something solemnizing in this wild waste of woods. Wandering in their recesses, the sunbeams, as it were, eclipsed, and the cold air penetrating my frame, I have been able to realize the truthfulness of Montgomery's beautiful lines—

> "No breath from heaven refreshed the sultry gloom,
> The arching forest seemed one pillar'd tomb,
> Upright and tall the trees of ages grow,
> While all is loneliness and waste below."

Europeans generally associate with the scenery of Georgia and the Carolinas groves redolent with the luscious perfumes of magnolia blossoms, glades of evergreen oak, and savannahs clothed with varied wild flowers. All these do, now and then, cross the traveller's path; but he will find far more commonly brushwood copses, sandy barrens, dismal woods of pitch-pine, and morasses apparently untenanted even by game. We shall, therefore, leave the south and transport ourselves

to Indiana, to see the autumn glory of its forests under an October sky. It is worth one's while to cross the Atlantic in order to enjoy the atmosphere of the Indian summer, when for weeks not a cloud appears in the horizon, and the rays of light are mellowed only by that almost imperceptible haze which comes, we are told, from the red men smoking their pipes beyond the pasture-ground of the buffaloes. Between Indianapolis and the Ohio you now and then emerge from the forests into clearings which afford striking pictures of life in the backwoods of America, the stumps remaining in the ground quite close to the few log-huts and half-dozen frame-dwellings which constitute a settlement; while corn grows under dead, upright trees, and dense woods all around shut out the rays of the morning and the evening sun. Gay and gorgeous is the foliage in the western States during the summer months; but who can describe the instantaneous and marvellously-beautiful effect produced by the first severe frost in October. Rich as earth's drapery was before, now it appears as if bathed in the hues of the rainbow, as if in the hours of darkness the angels had descended from their pavements of sapphire and painted creation the colour of heavenly flowers. Never can I forget a journey through Indiana in the later fall, when every glade revealed to me brighter and more varied tints than I had ever seen before, to use the glowing words of Coleridge—

> "Hanging woods that touched by autumn seem
> As they were blossoming hues of fire and gold."

The oaks wore a mantle of dark crimson, the creeping-vines and underwood were dyed vermilion, the poplars were dressed out in yellow, the beeches robed in purple looked like Nature's kings, a delicate flame colour distinguished the rock maples, while the pine and the giant hemlocks stood aside in their sombre green, and above a sky of brilliant blue completed the gorgeous livery of the scene. Then, as the sun sank in the west, rays of crimson and gold seemed to set fire to the forest; a pale lavender hue next prevailed in the heavens, till

the last streaks of light departed, and the night wind ushered in a clear cold moon.

A few moments' consideration bestowed on the unprecedentedly rapid rise of some new cities in the north-western States may, perhaps, assist towards forming an idea of the wonderful energy which characterizes the American people, and of the vast resources of that country which the Almighty, for wise and momentous ends, has given them as an inheritance. In 1846, I stood on the brow of a hill half way down the Ohio, which fifty years before commanded a view over a wilderness of forest, unexplored even by the adventurous huntsman wandering far from the abodes of men. The smoke from a few scattered Indian wigwams was the only indication of inhabitants. The grassy banks of the rivers were covered with deer as yet unwarned by the rifle's sound. How different the view presented to me. True, woods of great extent still might be seen, but between me and the noble stream, in all the pride of regular architecture and great prosperity, lay Cincinnati, the "Queen City of the West," then containing 70,000 people, now doubled in population and size. Numerous church spires, a maze of crowded streets, great foundries for iron and brass, cotton-mills, pork-curing establishments, and huge hotels, filled my mind with astonishment, and I had scarcely time to notice the many elegant villas scattered on the hill-sides and over the plain, or the fleet of high-pressure steamers moored to the wharf.

Three hundred and fifty miles as the crow flies, farther west, a short distance below the junction between the Mississippi and the Missouri, stands St. Louis, the commercial capital of the western country. Its rows of lofty brick warehouses, extensive workshops, and elegant stores, will surprise any one who knows that at the commencement of the present century its foundations had not been laid. Now, more than 100,000 people carry on within its municipality an active trade with all the regions watered by the Mississippi and its tributaries, and though upwards of 1300 miles from the sea,

I counted fifty-three steamers lying at the levee, or broad, roughly-paved embankment, which slopes down to the stream, and serves as a quay. The annual commerce of St. Louis, imports and exports included, does not fall much short of 100,000,000 dollars. I shall scarcely be believed when I state that at first sight it reminded me of Liverpool. So far back as 1848, it owned 24,000 tons of steamboats, and during that year, besides 815 flat boats, there arrived at the port steamers with a tonnage of 469,735. Every ward of the city has a spacious and well-aired market; the new churches struck me as most expensive erections, and I sauntered into one coach-building establishment which would not have disgraced the west-end of London. Then take Buffalo, well deserving its appellation, "the Queen City of the Lakes." Main-street, with its hotels, stores, shops, squares, and promenades, will bear a comparison with any street in America, though only forty years ago it had no existence, and the quays on Lake Erie are so crowded with men and merchandize, that you can with difficulty walk. In 1814, this town was burnt to the ground by the British soldiery; in 1850, it contained a population of 42,261. Detroit, 250 miles farther west, has of late years also advanced with extraordinary rapidity. Already it can boast of far finer shops than we have in many of our provincial towns, and having been laid out in avenues, squares, and circuses, with remarkable taste and skill, promises to be the handsomest city in North America.

Finally, I mention Chicago, which in 1831 was a mere trading-post, from which huntsmen sallied out to attack the buffaloes, and where the red-men disposed of their furs. Many Americans, even when I first visited the States in 1846, had never heard of it; in 1854, I found it a city of 60,000 inhabitants, having 7627 dwellings, 1184 stores, 54 schools, 61 churches, and 196 manufactories. Twenty years ago, Lake Michigan there rolled in upon a deserted, sandy beach, to which now and then a solitary trapper stole down to watch for an Indian

canoe. Now not a day passes but steamers, propellers, and sailing craft enter a well-protected harbour; three railroad lines have their termini in the suburbs; the electric telegraph brings the news in a few hours from the Atlantic seaboard; splendid stone churches rear their steeples above the houses, and in the Tremont Hotel I sat down to dinner with three hundred travellers from all parts of the world. One omnibus company alone now employs seventy horses on a spot where, thirty years before, the red-man pitched his wigwam, and hunted the elk. If this be not progress, we shall search the universe for it in vain.

Only one more panoramic view remains; it displays

> "The gardens of the Desert,
> The unshorn fields boundless and beautiful,
> For which the speech of England has no name,
> The Prairies."

The boom of Niagara fills the stranger with awe; so does the deep silence of these treeless, flowery plains. They are covered with long grasses and ferns, and extend in gentle undulations far as the eye can reach, little clumps of timber now and then only rendering their unbroken vastness more striking. Mount on a hillock, and you see an ocean of verdure waving in the breeze. In the absence of foliage, Nature seems to have put forth her inventive powers, and carpeted the earth with gems. The wild flowers are of all sizes and colours, but generally large, and tinted as gorgeously as the gayest robes that were ever dyed by the merchant princes of Tyre. The soil of these illimitable savannahs is the richest on earth, and in summer they look as if clothed in a garment of party-coloured damask, made by a superior race of men. As I wandered on the Grand Illinois Prairie, collecting specimens of the beautiful plants which decked it, I felt deeply solemnized by a sense of stillness and immensity, and almost persuaded myself that angelic voices whispered in the wind which blew softly from the bright red clouds in the western

heavens, and wafted towards me the fragrance of so many flowers.

The buffalo has but recently disappeared from the plains lying eastward of the Mississippi, yet an active population is fast bringing them under the plough, and in a very few years we shall look in vain for prairies on this side of the river. I have alluded frequently to the progress of the Great West, to its populous cities, its workshops, its railroads, its steamers, and its agricultural resources; but beyond it lies another region which deserves a word of notice before I close. Will my reader for one moment accompany me in thought across the flowery savannahs of Illinois, the wheatlands of Wisconsin, and the fertile watercourses of Iowa to what may now be termed the Far West—to Minnesota and Nebraska, whither already the pioneers of the Anglo-Saxons have gone to build log huts and plant corn on fields where armies without a historian have often met in savage battle, and whose soil has been watered by the blood of chiefs? "Westward the star of empire takes its way," and before the march of Yankee civilization there disappear, not only the Indian and the buffalo, but the trapper who delights in the wild life of the chase, and the French halfbreed who carries the tail of a rattlesnake for an amulet, and tries to frighten away the thunder by whistling at it through the wing-bone of an eagle. The rapidity with which American institutions have extended to these newly-organized territories is truly surprising. Steam saw-mills are now in operation, axes and hammers are busily at work where one year ago the red-men assembled round their council fires, and towns have sprung into existence near the Falls of St. Anthony, whilst the smoke of Indian lodges was still visible in the west.

> "Behind the scared squaw's birch canoe
> The steamer smokes and raves,
> And city lots are staked for sale
> Above old Indian graves."

On rivers scarcely known in Europe even by name,

rafts containing three million feet of timber may be seen, and Christian churches stand on bluffs which formed the rendezvous of painted warriors only a few summers before. St. Paul is 2087 miles from the mouth of the Mississippi, in a region purchased from the Sioux; already its hum may be heard over waters on which only lately the bark canoes of the aborigines glided silently along, and railroads are projected to connect it with valleys fertile and promising, but yet silent and wild as when "the stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." The blockhouses and forts no longer stand quite beyond the pale of civilization, and eager New Englanders cast a longing eye towards those vast plains between the Missouri and the Yellowstone, where the deer and the antelopes still shelter themselves from the forays of wolves, under the powerful protection of the buffaloes. The huntsmen and trappers of the last century, and the undaunted missionaries of Christianity, who in former days discovered these territories, would not know them now. As the red-men retire to the obscurer west, they undergo a mighty change, and for my part, when I think of the schools and churches and other beneficent institutions which keep pace with the march of the conquering race, I cannot but rejoice in the transformation, and thank God for raising up such a people to govern the American continent.

THE END.

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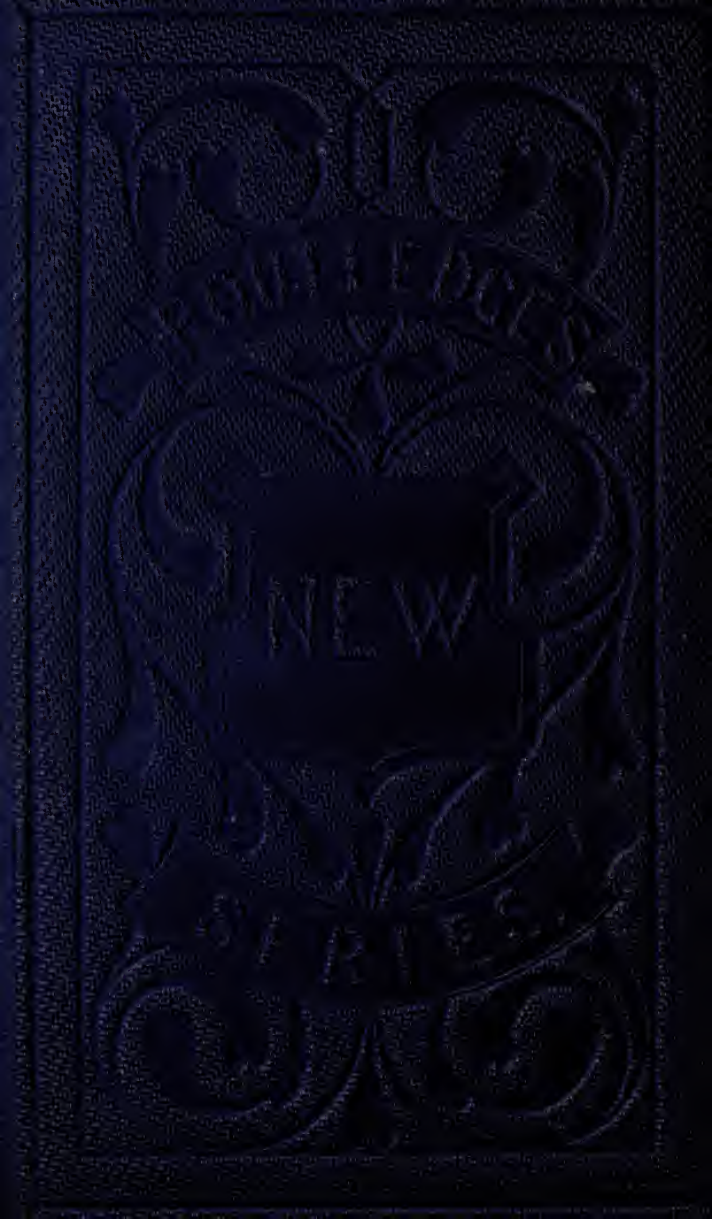
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